Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

August 1999

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The End of the American Century

A Round Table Discussion With

Bill Kauffman, Harold O.J. Brown, Wayne Allensworth, John Lukacs, and Chilton Williamson, Jr.

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Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Modesty

I was disappointed by Karina Rollins' simplistic portrayal of sexual mores in her review of Wendy Shalit's book, *A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue* ("Natural Woman," May). Shalit's book should not have been embraced so uncritically. In fact, I doubt that anyone with mature sensibilities could get through it without shuddering at its schoolgirl moralism.

Shalit writes, "Before, it was a woman's prerogative to say no . . . while now it is a man's prerogative to expect sex." Since when? That may be *her* perception, but no women I know would agree. It's more like men today *hope* for sex, as they always have.

In the past, according to Shalit, "female modesty gave men a frame of reference for a woman's 'no.'" She maintains that the loss of that frame of reference has caused an increase in date rape and violence against women. Today, "taught from day one that women are always as ready to receive advances as they are eager to make them, the modern male always takes a 'no' as a personal rebuke." It sounds to me like Shalit has been hanging out with the wrong men—with men who *ought* to take "no" as a personal rebuke!

In reality, most perpetrators of date rape are immature, unformed characters who do not know how to conduct themselves with women. Some are frat boys with the very same ideals about women that Shalit holds, but who nevertheless *act* on other desires. I think we all know men who espouse lofty ideals for women but still want to take advantage when the opportunity presents itself. Then too, many victims are naive young women (like Shalit?) who do not recognize the situations in which they find themselves, and who do not know how to make decisions, communicate firmly, and take charge of situations. Mature women accept such responsibilities because they have learned to recognize the practical requirements for dealing with the male ego.

In short, Shalit and Rollins ignore the essential *realism* of sexual decorum. Encouraging young women not to be hapless in dealing with men would be more helpful than their cliché prescription for more "modesty." A woman must develop enough self-possession to make herself clear and to keep some measure of control over her own life, particularly in its most intimate aspects.

Of course, it would be nice if ours were a more *decorous* society, if social relations between men and women were conducted with maturity. However, a more decorous society would also be one in which people were accomplished at minding their own business in matters as private as sex. Since people tend to end up with partners who subscribe to sexual mores similar to their own, the sexual mores of everyone else are not particularly my business, nor yours.

If Shalit would attend more to her own business, she might show a little "modesty" in her pronouncements, rather than spinning her naive premises into grandiose sociological theory. For example, Shalit argues that embarrassment over virginity leads to anorexia and bulimia. "In a culture that permits food hang-ups but not sex hang-ups, it's become the new way for a girl to express her modesty, to restore distance between men and herself." Shalit clearly has not investigated the actual dynamics of eating disorders. Virgin anorexics? Please.

A Return to Modesty is not provocative; it is flippant, and at times downright vulgar. In spite of the book's title, Shalit's take on sexual relations is so crass as to be embarrassing to read. All of the quotations that I have used here are used by Rollins *approvingly* in her review. The courteous thing to do is to pull the veil of modesty over this sort of cliché exhibitionism, not pay uncritical homage to it. The book review, like the book, is just

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one more display of a moral exhibitionism that permeates American popular culture today, to the detriment of intellectual and personal integrity.

—*Amy Kiernan*
Denver, CO

On Flexibility

Let me get this straight. In the June *Chronicles*, one W. Robert Hawkins opposed the U.S. war against Serbia, dismissing interventionist congressmen as ahistorical nitwits and likening the Serbs to Texans threatened with the loss of San Antonio. Yet in the April 26, 1999, number of the *Weekly Standard*, one William R. Hawkins, "senior research analyst for Rep. Duncan Hunter," demands that we "go in on the ground." My hunch is that the non-interventionist W. Robert and the chickenhawk William R. are one and the same. What gives, Gumby?

The swaggering William R. asks, Robert McNamara-like, if we are "willing to pay the price of victory." Ooooh. If I were a girl (or a *Weekly Standard* editor), I'd swoon at this display of congressional staffer machismo. As an American, I'm merely disgusted.

—*Cody Annixter*
Home, PA

On the Human Condition

My grandparents both emigrated from Germany shortly after World War I. Grandma hailed from a small town on the plains of Lower Saxony, and Grandpa grew up in a smaller town in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps. Both came from large families and left behind numerous brothers and sisters and their offspring. Among my second and third cousins are small farmers, a young couple that runs a pizzeria, and a family that owns a small electronics retail and repair shop.

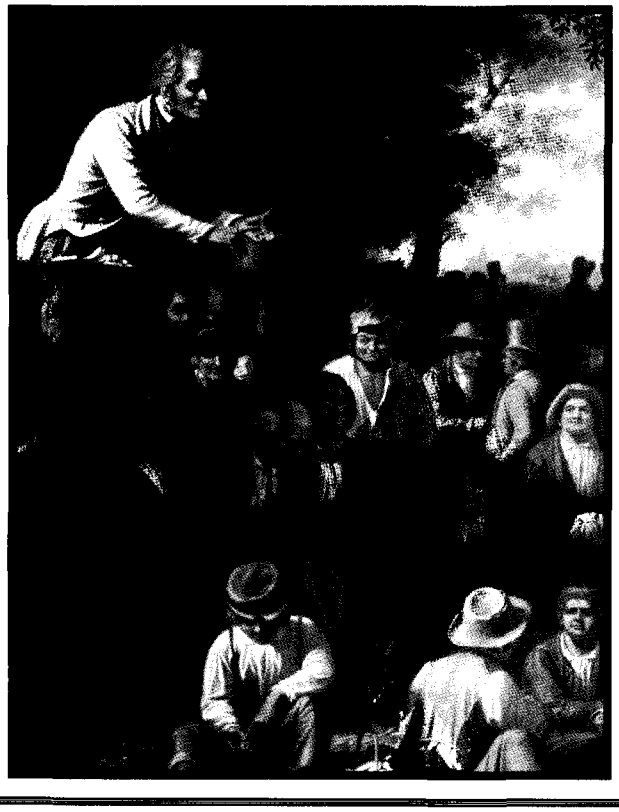
On a recent trip to Germany, my brother and I took a survey, asking our relatives what they thought of monetary union. The split in opinion followed predictable patterns. Those that worked for large corporations favored the euro, while those that operate their own businesses were strongly against any further euro-integration. They realize that they will be squashed by foreign imports and encroaching chains such as Pizza Hut.

During our trip, I discovered small-town German virtue as I was joyfully welcomed into the homes of virtual strangers. I ended up in places where Catholicism is openly celebrated and the mayor had the gall to say a prayer in the local public school (and the world did not end). My observations confirmed my belief that the people behind *Chronicles* understand the human condition more completely than those at any other institution that I know of.

I support *Chronicles* and The Rockford Institute because you have opened my eyes to a world that I did not know existed. I am one of those typical Americans who graduated from college without an education—someone who tossed away religion in favor of popular culture. In fact, I made it through college without having read Shakespeare (or any other literature for that matter) and without having the slightest idea that it might be worthwhile to read Shakespeare. Because of your influence, I have now scratched the surface of this strange and exciting world. In many ways, I do not live up to the expectations I now have of myself, but with your help I at least know the right direction. In other words, I can never really pay you back.

—*Peter McGraw*
St. Paul, MN

P.S. I work for a large anti-family bank that is gobbling up every community bank it can find. Shortly, I will resign my position. When they ask me why, I will say that I am going home to study Latin.



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Is there anything *Chronicles* editors can't speak on?
(Okay, we're still looking for a physicist.)

For a complete list of speakers and topics, contact Aaron Wolf at (815) 964-5811

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THE MEDIA told us that "critics warn bombing alone won't budge Milosevic," so when bombing alone did budge him, the media told us 'twas a famous victory. "It worked!" gushed Mara Liasson of National Public Radio as the G-8 peace accord was announced in early June. "Clinton is vindicated, and Gore is looking good again. . . . Clinton was right!"

"Bombing alone" broke the Serbian resistance, and little wonder. An elderly man in Belgrade, Aleksandar Stamatovic, told an Associated Press reporter, "That agreement was the only choice. There was no other—they were killing us." It is utterly amazing the results you can get when you're willing to bomb civilians and their power grids and water supplies indiscriminately. Why bother with moral cover? After all, it worked!

Between 5,000 and 30,000 people who were bothered by the allies' conspicuous lack of moral cover gathered at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial on Saturday, June 5, then marched to the Pentagon. They should have marched to Foggy Bottom, where this operation was incubated for many years before the military was ordered to drop it down the hatches. The misdirection of the marchers was symptomatic of a more serious problem with the march, and by extension with (what's left of) the opposition to the current regime in this country.

The largest contingent at the march represented hard-bitten, old-guard factions of what was once, long ago, the New Left: Workers' World Party, Socialist Workers Party, Fourth International, and so on. In other words, the "blame America first" crowd, for whom Kosovo is just Addendum #999 to be tacked onto their long-drawn-up indictment of racist, sexist, homophobic, capitalist, imperialist, militarist America—folks who have hung in there long enough to see their wildest, darkest charges finally come true (even a stopped clock . . .). These losers were politically marginalized years ago, *dépasses par l'histoire*, and won't ever catch up.

Serbs, other Slavs, and a few Greeks were the next largest contingent, as blood told, followed by pacifists and greens, and finally a motley crew of hippies and punks. Around such a coalition no vital movement can be built in this country, as we have seen again and again. The media's portrayal of the Vietnam War and the anti-war movement on TV forced U.S. withdrawal from that conflict, but the media aren't playing it that way now.

This time, in the endgame of nations, the media are all wide, dewy eyes and blissed-out smiles and breathy, bubbly voices like a commercial for term-life insurance. Power politics don't raise a single famous-anchor eyebrow. *Macht macht Recht*—it worked! Nice guys finish last—Clinton was right! We're in the game, playing hardball with the big boys in the major leagues!

In the film noir *Body Heat*, Richard Crenna portrays a rich and evil businessman who sneers to small-time shyster William Hurt, "There are two kinds of people in the world—a------s, and those who are willing to do what it takes. Which kind are you?" (I will not rent the movie again to render the lines exactly.) Can't you just hear Clinton saying something similar to Vince Foster during that last long phone call the night before Vince lost what it takes to stay alive? And isn't that really the distinction between the lords and the little people?

"The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity," Yeats sensed on the eve of World War I. Many years earlier, Nietzsche foresaw the emergence of men beyond good and evil who would run roughshod over a world tenderized by generations of Christian morality. Kosovo is immoral!—It worked! Oppressive!—It worked! Exploitative!—It worked! Unjust!—It worked!

NATO's global managers have fully recovered from the "sickness" of Christianity, as Nietzsche would put it, and are above and beyond any appeal to ethics or morality or any law you care to cite, spiritual or temporal. Moral constraints, like paying taxes, are for the little people. Efforts to shame them into being nice will not work. Bombing them would work (bombing, *mirabile dictu*, works like a charm on anything!), but they seem to control all the bombs now that Tim McVeigh's been put away.

There are two kinds of people in our shrinking, massifying world: the bombers and the bombed. Therefore, shouldn't wise and caring parents devoutly strive to place their children in the bombers' ranks? In a world with many Kosovos yet to come, isn't it dangerous to weaken and confuse a child with moral qualms? Globalism means that Earth's six billion will virtually all be reduced to little people, infinitesimal people; and it means that your child will have only about a one in three million chance of being elevated above "target" status.

Sauve qui peut.

—Marian Kester Coombs

OUR CULTURAL DISORDERS weren't caused by the Supreme Court's prayer decisions—I'll admit it. The implication that school prayer, by fortifying Young America, might have forestalled the rampage at Columbine High School, and those rampages preceding it—well, I wouldn't push the matter too far, that's all.

Still, it's nice to see the American Civil Liberties Union, prissy proponent of forcible church-state "separation," rebuked by Joe and Mary Doaks. It happened this spring at a rural high school in Maryland. Following a kind of popular uprising in support of prayer, the ACLU became righteously indignant and spluttery. Just my kind of uprising!

Ordered to keep prayer out of this year's commencement exercise lest the delicate sensibilities of a lone senior be affronted, sniff, sniff, the school lamely agreed. The ACLU was helping the student: a towering presence for one local school board to take on.

Then, during a moment of silence in the ceremony, someone in the audience began intoning the Lord's Prayer. Hundreds joined in. Officials on the stage joined in. It was like the long-suffering French patriots in *Casablanca* joining Paul Henried in drowning out *Die Wacht am Rhein* with the *Marseillaise*.

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done"—whether the ACLU likes it or not. So arrest us! the audience, in effect, was saying. Feed us to the lions!

The senior whose theological scruples concerning prayer had provoked the whole episode stalked out angrily, later spending some time in a squad car after he was denied readmission. (The guards said they were afraid he would cause a scene. Hadn't he already?)

At ACLU headquarters, brows were furrowed. "The real loser," said spokes-

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man Suzanne Smith, "is the Constitution and the right of the people to express dissent."

Oh—that wasn't what was going on there? "The people" weren't expressing "dissent"? Interesting logic. The ACLU's point, of course, is that people who agree with ACLU positions express dissent, whereas those who disagree must be expressing something else. Nasty, Nazi-like tendencies, no doubt. *Sieg heil*!

The importance of prayer in the context of secular education has been inflated by sentimental recollection of pre-Madalyn Murray O'Hair days and by restlessness over the lack of easy solutions to our disorders. My own high school, in the 1950's of semi-blessed memory, was moderate on the question: prayers only at football games and solemn occasions like commencement; student-led devotionals before school for those who desired that sort of witness. And ours was a pretty religious community. In secularized, multicultural America, school prayer is clearly a far hotter potato than was the case 35 years ago. And yet . . . and yet . . .

The ACLU's secular snobbishness; its failure, and that of secularists in general, to acknowledge that others besides atheists and freethinkers have rights and sensitivities—such are the wellsprings of resentment against the Supreme Court's church-and-state regime. This, coupled with the persistent sense that piety toward the Divine is fundamental to the life of any civilized community. The news from Maryland suggests that at least one such community endures.

—*William Murchison*

Constitutional lawyers like to tell the story (probably apocryphal, since it's too good to be true) that, sometime in the 1960's, when the Warren Court was engaged in its effort to rewrite the Constitution, one crusty old Harvard Law professor, upon reading the latest product from the Supremes, stormed into his constitutional law class, roared like an agonized beast, threw his con law casebook at the podium, and declared to his baffled students that he could no longer teach them constitutional law since there no longer was constitutional law. It is said he went on to teach tax.

That professor has joined the ongoing seminar on federal jurisprudence in the sky, but one wonders what he would have thought of the Supreme Court's recent decision in the case of LaShonda Davis. Miss Davis, a fifth grader in a Georgia public school, was allegedly the victim of one G.F., another fifth grader, who "attempted to touch LaShonda's breasts and genital area" and told her that "I want to get in bed with you" and "I want to feel your boobs." G.F. continued this and similar conduct for several months; once, in the words of the Supreme Court, he "purportedly [placed] a door stop in his pants and [proceeded] to act in a sexually suggestive manner toward LaShonda during physical education class." G.F. also allegedly "rubbed his body against LaShonda in the school hallway in what LaShonda considered a sexually suggestive manner."

LaShonda and her mother were unable to get her teachers or the school administrators to stop G.F.'s conduct, but these incidents came to an end when "G.F. was charged with, and pleaded guilty to, sexual battery for his misconduct." Presumably, this was a criminal proceeding, though the Court does not tell us what became of G.F. We do know what LaShonda's mother did, though. She brought a lawsuit against her local Georgia school board for $500,000 in damages, claiming that the board (through the inaction of LaShonda's teachers and school administrators) had discriminated against LaShonda in violation of federal law.

The federal law in question, Title IX, regulates the conduct of local schools receiving federal aid and provides that "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX makes no explicit authorization of individual private damage actions such as LaShonda's, nor does it suggest that student-on-student sexual harassment amounts to "discrimination under any education program or activity." Taking this into account, the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit ruled that LaShonda had not stated a claim under federal law.

Nevertheless, late in May, the United States Supreme Court, in an opinion written by the Court's first female justice, Sandra Day O'Connor, reversed, five to four, the decision of the 11th Circuit and decided that such private actions should be covered by Title IX, that "peer sexual harassment" allegedly occurred in LaShonda's case, and that the teachers and administrators who did not prevent it could be guilty of the sexual discrimination forbidden by Title IX. Justice O'Connor's opinion claimed that such a result would obtain only where school officials "remain[ed] deliberately indifferent to this form of misconduct" and the "sexual harassment" was "so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it can be said to deprive the victims of access to the educational opportunities or benefits provided by the school." In LaShonda's case, however, her only claim of deprivation of educational opportunities was that "her previously high grades allegedly dropped as she became unable to concentrate on her studies."

This was too much for the four dissenters, who must have felt like the tome-tossing Harvard Law professor. Observing that the Georgia county was receiving only $679,000 per year in federal aid, Justice Anthony Kennedy declared in the dissenting opinion that "The cost of defending against peer sexual harassment suits alone could overwhelm many school districts. . . . As a result [just as in the case at bar] school liability in one peer sexual harassment suit could approach, or even exceed, the total federal funding of many school districts."

Unfortunately, the problems for school districts are even more alarming, because local school administrators, under earlier federal regulatory decisions, get it both coming and going. Said Justice Kennedy, "One student's demand for a quick response to her harassment complaint will conflict with the alleged harasser's demand for due process. Another student's demand for a harassment-free classroom will conflict with the alleged harasser's claim to a mainstream placement under the [federal] Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or with his state constitutional right to a continuing, free public education."

There was no need for Justice O'Connor and her meddlesome colleagues to read this new and noxious federal civil right into Title IX. State criminal and tort remedies are available, and there are probably state education policies in place designed to offer relief to schoolchildren such as LaShonda. Those of us who had hoped that Justice O'Connor would continue her earlier practice of guarding against the encroachment of the federal leviathan into areas traditionally reserved to state and local governments might be

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forgiven if we feel like hurling our law books at the podium, or if we feel as mistreated as LaShonda.

—*Stephen B. Presser*

SLOVAKIA'S PRESIDENTIAL RACE was not big news in May, as the world's attention was focused on NATO's destruction of a small Slavic country to the south. The predictable first-round results pitted the controversial former leader of the fledgling democracy, Vladimir Meciar, against the ex-communist mayor of Kosice, Rudolf Schuster. Throughout his stormy career, Meciar, who played a significant role in the break-up of Czechoslovakia, has been accused of cronyism and arrogance, and in the final run-off, the well-liked Schuster walked away with 57 percent of the vote.

Some Western commentators are hailing a "new era" in Slovakian politics. Meciar's nationalism and intransigence on minority questions had kept the country somewhat isolated from the rest of Europe. Like many older Slovaks, he turned a deaf ear to Hungarians claiming special status. Down to the end of World War I, Hungary had inflicted a repressive campaign of Magyarization on the Slovaks in an attempt to deprive them of their language, culture, and nationality, and the Hungarians belated respect for ethnic diversity, while attractive to Western powers looking for an opportunity to interfere, seems just a little hypocritical.

Mayor Schuster campaigned on a platform of continued economic reform and a promise of productive cooperation (wherever possible) with the government of Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda and support for the tough austerity measures it has imposed. The European Commission (among many other Western interest groups) has been pressuring the Slovak government to solve its ongoing economic crisis, but such pressures—when they were applied to Russia and, to a lesser extent, Poland—proved to be socially and politically destructive.

Schuster's election should clear the way for closer cooperation with the European Union and perhaps entrance into NATO. While most businessmen in Bratislava and Kosice will welcome these developments, others may some day look back with nostalgia to Meciar's flinty nationalism, forgetting all the reasons they were happy to send him into a retirement that will probably be permanent. The challenge to the new president will be to steer his country through its post-communist economic crisis without turning Slovakia into a province of the NATO empire.

—*Thomas Fleming*

"ADOPT A REFUGEE," the church bulletin urges. This Protestant church is encouraging each of its members to donate money, clothing, and personal items to the ethnic Albanian of his choice. On a marquee in front of an ornate Catholic church outside O'Hare Airport are the words, "Father, protect the refugees, in Jesus' name, Amen." An ad in the *Rockford Register Star* announces an evangelical rock band's "Concert for the Kosovar Refugees." And church leaders—from local priests and pastors to heads of synods, traveling speakers, and televangelists—seem to agree with Bill Clinton and Tony Blair that Slobodan Milosevic is the latest incarnation of Hitler. American Christians, it seems, are "sending a message" of their own to the people of Serbia.

It is a message not readily understood by Serbian Orthodox immigrants to America. "Don't they know the KLA is an Islamic terrorist group?" they ask. "Don't they realize that the Serbs are their Christian brothers and sisters?" Persecuted Christians from around the world are also puzzled. "Where was the outrage concerning Rwanda?" "Why are American Christians indifferent to the hostility faced by their brothers and sisters in China and India?"

American believers who back NATO are not self-consciously "social-gospel" liberals. Many are members of the Christian right. Indefatigable in their opposition to abortion and homosexuality, they continue to press for federally—now imperialistically—imposed morality, abstracted from any historical context, and derived largely from popular sentiment.

What the Serbian-Americans may not know is that American Christians have engaged in bizarre, anti-scriptural "moral" crusades for nearly 200 years. Beginning in the mid-17th century with the "Great Awakening," colonial Americans (particularly in New England) began to identify less with their churches' confessions (Savoy, Westminster, London, or the 39 Articles) and more with the spirit of revival. Parish life began to centralize around tent meetings, conversion experiences, and "excitements." An ecumenical homogenization was born.

Despite their reputations as radically austere Puritans, both Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards engaged in this ecumenism, testifying to their hopes that a Protestant coalition of Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Anglicans would fulfill the "city on a hill" vision of the first generation of Puritan immigrants, culminating in the millennial reign of Christ through His American church. This vision led many to support the wars against the French and the Indians, and then the American Revolution.

The push toward ecumenism produced an increasingly feminized coalition of evangelicals. Women, warned an angry Charles Chauncy, are more likely to swoon in the wake of the revival "excitements." The "Second Great Awakening" of the 1820's, led by lawyer Charles "I've-been-retained-by-Jesus-Christ" Finney, played upon sentiment by employing "new measures" like the "anxious bench" where revival audience members fraught with guilt could come and get right with God. Finney, who deplored the idea of the imputed righteousness of Christ, instead thundered against slavery and alcohol. Thousands of women and men came forward at the end of each meeting, determined to fight society's ills and save the Great Christian America.

Thus began a seemingly uninterrupted chain of social battles fought by evangelical coalitions led mostly by women. Often the sentiment behind these battles contradicted the direct teaching of Scripture. Though St. Paul said, "Slaves, obey your masters," and ordered Onesimus to return to Philemon, these early evangelicals crusaded as Abolitionists and elected President Lincoln, who brutalized the South and destroyed states' rights. Though the biblical world is a world of patriarchy—stemming from the doctrine of the Holy Trinity—they campaigned for women's suffrage, helping to destroy the solidarity of the family. Though the Psalmist praised wine as a gift from God that "gladdens the heart of man," and our Lord Himself mandated its use, they crusaded for Prohibition, resulting in the advent of organized crime. Now, with the Pill in one hand, they hold up signs with the other that say, "Abortion Kills Children."

"Adopt a refugee" campaigns in churches across America are not about loving one's enemy. They are a cathartic

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response to 24-hour-a-day CNN broadcasts of people huddled in tents in Albania and Macedonia. They carry with them the sentiments of Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, molded by two centuries of American evangelicalism. Articles reminding us that ethnic Albanians are responsible for the heroin trade in Europe and for teenage prostitution in Italy and have engaged in terrorist acts against the Serbian police simply cannot trump the sentiments that arise when evangelicals view footage of crying children.

We do not see footage of dead Serbian children or their crying mothers, and so the Serbs become a mere afterthought—collateral damage, a necessary evil, like the ravaging of Atlanta and Columbia in the mid-1860's. Nonetheless, the fact remains that 10,000 hours of Christiane Amanpour and Geraldo Rivera could not diminish the resolve nor confuse the loyalties of a people with an identity established not by cause or sentiment, but by the Nicene Creed. Save for a small remnant, that type of American Christian has long since perished from the earth.

—*Aaron D. Wolf*

MYTHS are part of what makes us human; all peoples live by myths, some healthy, some destructive. Among the unhealthy beliefs that have been propagated amongst Americans are that the Constitution came from the gods; that the conquest and destruction of the Southern states was noble; that the Americans who fought and died in World War II were starry-eyed devotees of global democracy. And, worst of all, that the 1960's generation was the most idealistic and love-filled of all generations. In fact, that generation was the most spoiled, selfish, and vicious generation ever produced by America. I know. I was there and saw them first hand. Their destructiveness, irrationality, and irresponsibility were evident to anyone who looked. Their behavior has been blamed on Doctor Spock's doctrines of permissive child-rearing. But there already had to be some widespread defect of character for Spock to gain entry into so many homes.

The late undeclared war in the Balkans (like urban crime and the drug culture) is merely the natural outcome of the 60's. The Flower Child generation happily sends cluster bombs to destroy innocent people who have caused them frustration. It is not a reversal of character for them, but a natural expression of their customary self-righteousness, irresponsibility, and viciousness.

—*Clyde Wilson*

OBITER DICTA: A number of the articles in this month's issue are drawn from *Chronicles*' recent conference in London on "The End of the American Century." Some of the proceedings of the conference are available on audiotape; please see the order form on p. 25 for descriptions and prices.

Readers may have noticed a few changes to our masthead in recent months. Dr. **Srdja Trifkovic**, the president of the Lord Byron Foundation and a long-time contributor to these pages, has become our foreign affairs editor. During the recent war against Yugoslavia, Dr. Trifkovic's knowledge and contacts allowed *Chronicles* and The Rockford Institute to continue their tradition of in-depth coverage of the Balkans.

Another long-time contributor to *Chronicles*, Dr. **Harold O.J. Brown**, has agreed to become *Chronicles*' religion editor. A professor of theology and philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina, Dr. Brown is also the editor of *The Religion & Society Report*. Starting in January, Dr. Brown will write a quarterly column on religion for *Chronicles*.

Chronicles is also pleased to announce that Dr. **Stephen B. Presser**, the Raoul Berger Professor of Legal History at Northwestern University School of Law, has become our legal affairs editor. Dr. Presser will ensure that we can provide our readers with sound analysis of the latest Supreme Court decisions, as well as developments in the legal field.

Chronicles welcomes our new designer, **Melanie B. Anderson**. She received her B.F.A. at Northern Illinois University and lives south of Rockford with her husband and son. In her short time with us, she has dramatically streamlined our production process and put her own stamp on the design of the magazine.

Two poets grace our pages this month. **John Nixon, Jr.**, a Bellamman Award winner from Fork Union, Virginia, was co-editor of the *Lyric* for 16 years. His poetry has appeared in, among others, the *New Yorker*, *America*, *Christian Century*, the *New York Times*, and the *Georgia Review*.

Our second poet, **Robert A. Hall**, is a Marine Vietnam veteran who later served five terms in the Massachusetts State Senate. Mr. Hall, who resides in Oaklyn, New Jersey, is a political columnist for the *Courier-Post*, a southern New Jersey daily, and the president of the Graphic Arts Association of Philadelphia.

Our art this month is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe.

Is America's War Against the Serbs a Just War?

Dr. Thomas Fleming gives the answer in his stirring address delivered May 28, 1999, at the Chicago Athletic Association.

For a copy of the tape, which includes a lively question and answer session, use the order form found on page 25.

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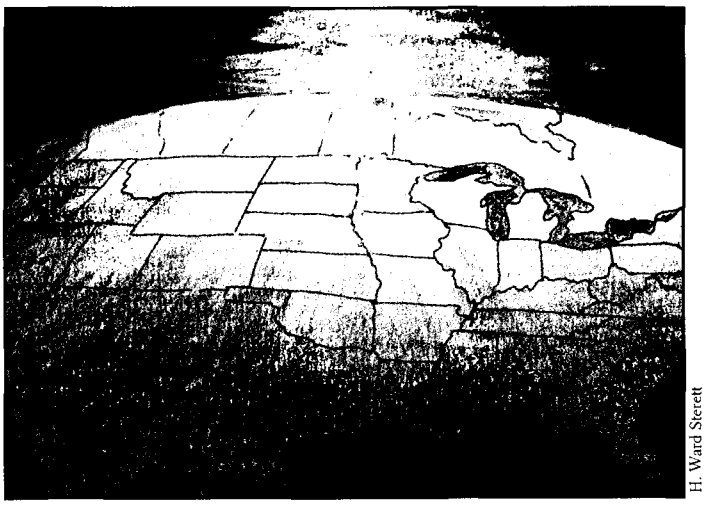

H. Ward Sterett

Remember the *Maine*

by Thomas Fleming

Henry Luce coined the phrase "The American Century" as an expression of the militant economic globalism that has characterized American policy from the days of William McKinley. Luce, the publisher of *Time* and *Fortune*, was the child of missionaries in China—a product, in other words, of American religious and cultural globalism. It is no small irony that this preacher's kid was the chief spokesman for a global movement which, in its mature phase, has emerged as the principal enemy of the Christian faith.

The approach to Christianity taken by the postmodern, post-civilized, and post-Christian American regime is a seamless garment: At home, the federal government bans prayer in school, enforces multiculturalism in the universities, and encourages the immigration of non-Christian religious minorities who begin agitating against Christian symbols the day they arrive; abroad, the regime refuses to defend Christians from the genocide inflicted by Muslims in the Sudan, while in the Balkans it has waged a ruthless and inhumane war against the Serbs of Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Serbia. The inhumanity of NATO's air campaign against villages, heating plants, and television stations reveals, even in the absence of other evidence, the anti-Christian hatred that animates the Washington regime. The destruction of Christianity in the Balkans, from this perspective, is only the first step toward the eventual goal, which Voltaire summed in his personal motto, "*écraser l'infame*."

Henry Luce was a devotee of the truly American religion of progress and profits, and after World War II his magazines reinvented a United States that was strangely detached from the realities of American life. His vision of America as one vast YMCA youth camp—albeit the youth had nuclear weapons—was about as realistic as the images projected by his contemporary and rival, Walt Disney.

Tailoring his message to patterns laid down by his country's political leaders, Luce did not believe that objective reporting was possible, much less desirable. Today, Luce's successors in the media play the same game on a vastly bigger stage, and corporate America has merged the visions of Time-Warner-NBC and Disney-CNN-ABC into a global ministry of fear.

Luce did not invent the American Empire; he only shilled for it. His American Century began in the Philippines 100 years ago, when the American regime refined the policies and techniques discovered in the Civil War. For 100 years, American globalists have pursued their aims, checked occasionally by the will of ordinary people—populists and progressives, America Firsters and peaceniks—people who, until recently, could not be fooled all of the time. That was before CNN.

The oldest and best form of American imperialism is the commercial expansion advocated by Republicans—McKinley, Taft, Hoover, and Eisenhower—who warned against the military-industrial complex. Although all of these free-traders were occasionally willing to back up the politics of self-interest with gunboats, they preferred to rely, whenever possible, on dollar diplomacy. McKinley had no hesitation about establishing American economic hegemony in Cuba and the Philippines, but he had to be dragged into war.

Free trade, these Babbitts believed, could be the route to market penetration around the globe, and one of the early slogans of commercial imperialists was the "Open Door." Sometimes, however, the door had to be kicked in by the Marines. As one spokesman for American industry put it 100 years ago, "One way of opening up a market is to conquer it." This is what Bill Clinton meant when he justified his attack on Yugoslavia on the grounds that we need a stable Europe as a market for American goods.

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The second strain is represented by the military imperialists: the two Roosevelts, neoconservative hawks like Jeane Kirkpatrick, and our hormonally challenged secretary of state. One hundred years ago, they put their trust in the Navy and gradually switched to advocating reliance on airpower: The common thread is a concern with long-range power and a desire to minimize risks to our troops. They want the United States to be the international cop or, increasingly, mercenary rent-a-cop hiring out to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Turkey.

Some day soon, we shall see NATO troops putting down the rebellious Kurds in Turkey—just a few months ago, the Turkish army was bombing the "rebel strongholds" and pursuing the Kurds into Iraq. Of course, it will take a few months to switch gears, to go from talking about the democratic right to secede to reaffirming our historical commitment to preserving sovereignty, but considering how quickly the American and British media switched principles on secession in the Balkans—yes to Croatia and Bosnia, no to the Bosnian and Krajina Serbs, yes to the Kosovo Albanians—it should not be much of a stretch either for the journalists or their readers, whose brains have been so pithed by TV that they are almost as stupid as Peter Jennings and Jim Lehrer.

The third strain is represented by sentimental imperialists, exemplified by Woodrow Wilson and Jimmy Carter, who sugarcoated America's global mission with the language of democracy, progress, human rights—an approach that justifies even more dangerous adventurism than the rent-a-cop militarism of George Bush.

Even the most tough-minded Americans are suckers for a messianic appeal; it must have something to do with the Puritan legacy. Even bluff old Bill McKinley, in declaring war on the people of the Philippines, a war that would cost the lives of more than 200,000 civilians, proclaimed the aim of our military administration was "to win the confidence, respect, and affection of the inhabitants . . . by assuring them . . . that full measure of individual rights and liberties which is the heritage of a free people, and by proving to them that the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation."

In even more unctuous tones, Bill Clinton insists that he is not making war on the Serbian people, only on Slobodan Milosevic. Milosevic, however, is still alive—so, for that matter, is Saddam Hussein—but thousands of Serbian and Albanian civilians are dead and many more thousands injured. When our missiles hit the homes of peasants and kill a dozen civilians, we say it is an unfortunate accident or that the Serbs blew up their own houses.

When Bill Clinton tells the world that "this is about our values," I wonder what values he means: The slaughter of the innocent? An addiction to lying? Adultery? Rape (a word forbidden in Washington out of consideration for the President's personal difficulties)?

There is, of course, a convergence of interests in these three strains: Bringing human rights to China means exporting pop commercial culture, which degrades the peasantry to the level of ours and forces them into the global marketplace of jeans and Cokes and McDonald's, while the militarists get to sell the most sensitive technology—or give it away in return for bribes—which thus alarms the right-wing paranoids in Middle America and gets them ready for all-out war, if necessary, with China.

The new American globalism has a logic of its own, one based on universal free trade, which destroys local economies; open immigration for non-Europeans and non-Christians, who can be used to undermine a civilization that is both Christian and European; and universal human rights, which are the pretext for world government.

Applied to Kosovo, this approach means giving unqualified support to the Muslim immigrants who were brought in by Turks for the express purpose of driving out and subjugating the Christian Serbs—a policy continued by German Nazis and Tito's communists. Now that these tactics have enabled them to constitute a majority, they are to be rewarded for over 100 years of terrorism. The object is to force any historic religious community to give way to the multicultural jurisdiction of the NATO empire, which is revolted by the Serbs' attachment to Kosovo as a sacred place, hallowed by ancient churches and by the blood of heroes and Christian martyrs.

American imperialism did not begin overnight, and its progress is not the result of a cynical conspiracy. It was inevitable that European settlers would conquer the continent and perhaps tragically fated that they would then apply the lessons they had learned to the rest of the world. The three formative experiences were the Civil War, the Indian Wars, and above all the Spanish-American War, and the techniques of manipulation and propaganda used in those conflicts are being applied—to the *n*th degree—in the NATO attack on Yugoslavia.

In the Spanish-American War, the propagandists first set up the contrast between the evil Spaniards and the virtuous natives, but when the Filipino natives wanted to liberate themselves and establish their own government, another metaphor was adopted, this one from the Indian Wars: hostiles and friendlies. In the Philippines, the press worked overtime railing against the primitive culture and savage behavior of the natives, which justified a thorough treatment. General Howling Jake Smith ordered his men to kill anyone who resisted—including women and children—along with all combatants, whom he defined as any male of ten years or more. He received his nickname when he told his officers to turn an entire island into a howling wilderness.

To persuade small-town American boys to risk their lives for a chance to butcher Filipinos or Serbs, you need a symbolic incident. The conflict with Mexico gave us a real massacre at the Alamo, but ever since we have found a series of phony events: the firing on Ft. Sumter, which Lincoln confessed was a set-up; the Gulf of Tonkin incident, which never took place. The sinking of the battleship *Maine*, which the Spaniards did not blow up in Havana Harbor, is the perfect parallel to the media-created massacres in Sarajevo. Every night on NATO TV, we are shown hour after hour of footage of weary Albanian refugees and a few minutes—if that—of the people killed by the bombing. In the world of Disney-CNN, real atrocities are buried under layers of faked incidents and commercial sentimentalism.

The media are obviously the key. As William Randolph Hearst cabled his reporter in Cuba (who had said he could find no war going on): "You furnish the pictures; I'll furnish the war." Every petty conflict becomes a mobilization of the press and the intellectual classes in a progressive struggle against fascism and inhumanity and the unending series of Hitlers and holocausts.

Anyone who has studied the examples of the Roman and British Empires will find the rhetoric familiar. Julius Caesar plundered his way across Gaul, always on the pretext that he was defending Rome's Gallic allies, first from the Germans and

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then from each other. A century and a half later, Tacitus, himself a member of the Roman imperial aristocracy, put this summation of Roman policy in the mouth of a British rebel: "They make a desert, and they call it peace." With the advantages of a classical education, America's British allies dubbed the NATO plan for Kosovo "Operation Agricola" in honor of the Roman general whose conquest of Britain had inspired his son-in-law Tacitus's characterization of the Roman Empire.

None of this would be possible without the eager complicity of the press, which has been conscripted into military service. Teddy Roosevelt was shocked by newspapermen who looked upon their profession as just another job and insisted that they "are just as much public servants as are the men in government service themselves." It is a cozy relationship between government and the press, symbolized by the relationship between Jamie Rubin and Christiane Amanpour.

In the Kosovo conflict, whose purpose has never been defined (or, rather, has been defined once too often), people like Sen. John McCain are saying, in essence, that they do not know why we are bombing Yugoslavia but now that we are, we must send in ground troops to maintain the credibility of NATO, and more than one presidential candidate thinks he can crawl into the White House over the bodies of dead Serbian civilians. Even critics of the Clinton-Blair bombing have constantly reiterated their "support for the Commander in Chief"—a phrase that will someday be viewed as the English translation of "We were only following orders."

At the beginning of the century, when Uncle Sam was conquering the Philippines, his cousin John Bull was mopping up the Boers. Winston Churchill advised the Americans to be as ruthless in pursuit of their empire as the English were in South Africa. But the Boer War was actually the beginning of the end for the British Empire, as many patriotic Englishmen (like G.K. Chesterton) recoiled in horror from the brutality of imperial conquest.

Unfortunately, the United States did not learn its lesson in the Philippines. Badly checked in Southeast Asia, we believed we had learned the lesson of Vietnam—to leave complex and inscrutable foreign conflicts to the locals—but in the 1980's, a new exuberance began to manifest itself, in Central America, for example, where shadowy representatives of the administration and the CIA played war games that cost the lives of tens of thousands of Nicaraguans and Salvadorans. When our allies murdered several Jesuit priests, a sinister American diplomat named William Walker covered up the evidence and helped prepare the official lie given to the American people, and it was that same William Walker who conveniently discovered the Racak massacre of 45 Albanian civilians and gave Bill Clinton his excuse for a war. That massacre, however, never took place, as our readers know.

Racak takes it place alongside of other phony incidents—the sinking of the *Maine* and the Reichstag Fire. And when NATO has finished with the Serbs, it can discover the persecution of the helpless Chechyns in Russia or, better still, the persecuted Albanians in Northern Greece—an area explicitly claimed by Albanian-American spokesmen.

Tony Blair and Bill Clinton look on the conquest of Serbia as the beginning of a NATO world-empire; I rather think it is America's Boer War, the beginning of the end for a country that was once a great republic and is now a lousy empire.

C

DICTATIONS

Dedicated to the Proposition

Every moviegoer remembers the sign: "Keep your change. Tipping is un-American." It is on the cash register of the roadside diner that is the setting for *The Petrified Forest*. It is a strange expression. We don't say "un-French" (and hardly ever say "un-English"), and when we do, we mean only that something is not typical of the national character. For something to be French, it must be witty or stylish or off-color: "It's a general rule, though your zeal it may quench, if a family fool tells a joke that's too French, half a crown is stopped out of his wages."

To be un-American, however, is to be undemocratic or elitist or class-conscious. In *The Devil's Dictionary*, Ambrose Bierce spoofed American chauvinism by defining un-American as "wicked, tolerable, heathenish." In our national myth, as understood by one presumptuous immigrant (Crèvecoeur), "He is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced." This was 80 years before the American Caesar tried to persuade us that our nation was "dedicated to the proposition." Another presumptuous foreigner was closer to the truth: "Americans . . . would rather be equal in slavery than unequal in freedom," and we have been forging the chains of equality since Tocqueville's time. Henry Luce's "American Century," in this sense, was really the "Equality Century."

In the 1950's, leftists made fun of the House Un-American Activities Committee because they hated their country; conservatives defended the committee because they had already appropriated the Jacobin-leftist view of America as an idea and not a nation. Once that door is opened, then all the Henry Luce-John F. Kennedy-Bill Bennett bunkum about this glorious democracy comes bursting in like a legion of devils to occupy what had once been a nation.

This truly is the American Century, a century of equal slavery for all, of gulags and gas chambers, of Dresdens and Kosovos, a century in which the real things of everyday life are replaced by sham liberty, sham equality, and sham human rights. "Shine perishing republic."

—*Humpty Dumpty*

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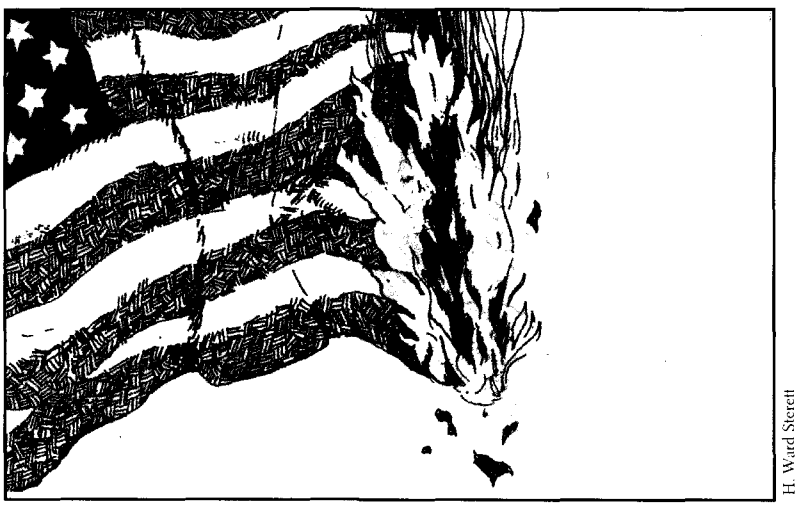
A Round Table Discussion

THE END OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY



H. Ward Sterett

The Anti-American Century

by Bill Kauffman

The anti-American Century began with a bad moon rising. Our new possessions across the sea were awash in colonial gore. Surveying from afar the corpses of Filipino independence fighters and our blood-spattered flag, Mark Twain suggested that we substitute the skull and crossbones for the stars and stripes. The Indiana-bred poet William Vaughn Moody, a Grover Cleveland Democrat, despaired that "We have changed our birthright for a gourd."

Is it too late to get a refund?

How appropriate that Henry Luce, minter of that counterfeit phrase "The American Century," was born in Tengchow, China, the son of missionaries who devoted their lives to pestering Chinese persons who had never done them any harm. For the architects and wardens of the American Century have been distinguished largely by the tenuity of their connection to any of the thousands of little American cultures they have worked so assiduously to stamp out. The Wise Men of the 1940's and 50's who offered our gold, frankincense, and men to their god of anticommunism were the Anglophilic products of eastern boarding schools—placeless persons from the age of 12 or whenever it was that their invariably alcoholic parents packed them off to Groton or Hotchkiss.

The politicians and propagandists of the Serbian massacre are just as countryless. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is Czech, and in full possession of the unwarranted arrogance of that notable people. Senator John McCain, a military brat, was born in the malarial symbol of American imperialism, the Panama Canal Zone. The hawkish *Weekly Standard* is owned by a drably sinister Australian and edited by a warmongering (if war-avoiding) TV celebrity beside whom the epicene George Stephanopoulos looks like Chesty Puller. Bill Clinton, alas, is American, albeit a recipient of Cecil Rhodes's blood money.

We are in a real fix—the fix is in, and we are out, so it seems—but what are you gonna do except trust that there remains enough independence and spunk and hey-boss-go-to-hell defiance in the character of Americans that a patriotic resistance, or perhaps even restoration, might develop. "I should hate to spend the only life I was going to have here in being annoyed with the time in which I happened to live," said Robert Frost, who placed his faith in "insubordinate Americans." As the beginning typing drill goes, now is the time for all good insubordinates to come to the aid of their country.

Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America *(Praeger).*

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The American Century has been a disaster for Americans. We lost our republic, local self-government, community stability, and hundreds of thousands of our sons and brothers and fathers. But we are not vanquished. Not yet. A popular pin from the 1900 presidential campaign of William Jennings Bryan read, "No Foreign Alliance, No Trusts, No Imperialism For U.S." A century later, the pin still fits.

The American (Not Christian) Century

by Harold O.J. Brown

In the late 1980's, I predicted that by the end of the century, which is also the end of the millennium, "The Soviet Union, or perhaps by that time, Russia, would be Christian, and the United States would be pagan." The first, hesitant part of that prophecy, Russia, has already been fulfilled. And while Russia has not been transmuted into a Christian nation, Christianity, especially but not only Russian Orthodoxy, already enjoys a status in Russia that is increasingly denied it in the United States.

In the United States, the situation seems to be reversed. At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian Orthodox Christianity was the established religion in Russia; in the United States, there was no "establishment of religion," but the three major faiths, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and Judaism, all flourished. Then came the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, which officially proclaimed its atheism, expropriated the churches, and persecuted clergy and believers alike with varying degrees of severity. But the Russian churches survived. Orthodoxy, although weakened, persisted, and the registered and unregistered Protestant fellowships grew and flourished—if one can use that word for the situation of believers in an atheistic society. The situation of the churches in early 20th-century America was officially different, but if anything stronger in reality. No church was officially established, but all were held in reverence and enjoyed the benign attention of government and the courts, up to and including the Supreme Court.

America, unlike Russia, suffered no revolution, and the nation emerged not only victorious but triumphant, immensely strengthened and relatively undamaged, from two world wars, and perhaps fatally tempted to the sort of spiritual pride that goes before a fall. Russia was savagely wounded by World War I, revolution, and civil war, not to mention the organized oppression of a totalitarian system. World War II carried fire and sword to the very borders of Moscow and cost the Soviet Union 20 million lives.

Yet at the end of the century, Christianity in Russia is showing signs of vitality; by no means dominant, it is nonetheless far from dead. At the end of what has been called "The American Century," Christianity in the United States, once culturally and morally dominant, is rapidly being reduced to the level of a barely tolerated eccentricity. G.K. Chesterton once called the United States a nation with the soul of a church. As the American Century reaches its end, the United States may be losing, or may already have lost, that soul.

During a visit to Russia, Professor Ed Tiryakian of Duke University commented on what he called "the occult persecution of Christianity at every level in the United States," including the courts, the legislatures, the universities, and the media. Communist Russia, like the pagan Roman Empire, tried varying degrees of force to stamp out religion; it did not succeed. That was overt persecution. The persecution in the United States is occult—that is, not officially declared and not acknowledged as such—but it is pervasive and omnipresent. Not merely public prayers, but every vestige of Christianity (as well as of other, less numerous religious groups) is driven from public view. The public expression of Christian conviction is coming to be regarded as only slightly less obnoxious, if that, than cigarette smoking.

In America's schools, the Ten Commandments have been pulled down from the walls, lest any student find himself "isolated." And in the halls, students shoot classmates and teachers, and some find themselves dead. *Bonne fin de siècle*, America!

Harold O.J. Brown is religion editor for Chronicles *and a professor of theology and philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina.*

The "Suffering Love" of Patriots

by Wayne Allensworth

The Russian writer Valentin Rasputin, himself no lackey of the Soviet regime, once attacked Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn for having crossed the line where "war against communism became war against . . . Russia." In Rasputin's eyes, the prophetic exile had stained Russia's reputation—not merely that of the communist regime—in his relentless assaults on Soviet power. The line can be a very thin one. At the end of "The American Century," I finally understand how Soviet-era Russian dissi-

Wayne Allensworth, who writes from Purcellville, Virginia, is the author of The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-Communist Russia *(Rowman & Littlefield).*

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dents must have felt when they attacked communism ("Then you favor unjust capitalism!?" screeched their inquisitors), criticized the war in Afghanistan ("Support the troops!"), and demanded that the Soviet authorities reopen the closed churches of their historically Orthodox Christian country ("Separation of church and state is the bedrock of our constitution!"). No real patriot ever intends to aid and comfort his homeland's enemies in either peace or war. But no patriot can stand idly by while his country, her body violated and possessed by the modernist demon (in either its communist or consumerist guise), is made vile and aggressive, as disfigured and offensive to the patriot himself as to the world she now threatens.

For those who can see clearly what we have become and can bear to gaze at an America whose image the world over is shaped by CNN's video clips of the victims of depraved adolescent murderers, their hapless and deracinated parents, and the New World Order's destruction of Yugoslavia (while soulless bureaucrats chirp their "regrets" over "collateral damage"), the revulsion felt and the desire to explain to any foreigner—or fellow American, for that matter—who will listen that this is not America but a nameless something else is almost overwhelming. At the end of the American Century, the America we love—and so many long for in silence, as "nostalgia" is deemed "reactionary" and "sentimental"—is preserved only in tiny islands of sanity: a small town where the people still answer the call of church bells (there are a few); the rapidly filling plains, deserts, and mountains of the West, our mythic American landscape; regional accents that somehow persist; and in the island of the patriotic imagination. America, like occupied Russia before her, still lives because a memory of her persists.

At the end of the American Century, the price of global empire has become evident. We are losing our country: Some even advise emigration. To where? The Russian patriot Sergei Bulgakov once wrote that only "suffering love gives one the right to chastise one's own nation." American dissidents should remember the example of those Russian exiles who, like Solzhenitsyn, suffered in their loving chastisement of a perverted Russia and have now returned to share her fate. No real life in a foreign land is possible for us, even if the America we have exists only in the soil we stand on and in the piercingly painful memories we possess. As long as we have them, there is hope.

New People, New Century

by John Lukacs

During the 19th century, the United States fought five wars, of which it won three, the Indian, the Mexican, and the Spanish-American ones; the War of 1812 was a draw; and then there was the Civil War, the bloodiest war of mankind until that time and the one that proved the grand failure of the American Constitution, even though that had not yet been overweighted by unnecessary amendments. During the 20th century, the United States fought six wars, of which it won three (the two world wars and the so-called Gulf War), drew one in Korea, and lost one in Vietnam. (The present war in Serbia is not yet over.)

One essential difference between the American wars in the two centuries ought to be noted. In the 19th century, the United States won all of its wars alone. In the 20th century, it did not. In both of the world wars, it was dependent on great allies, including Russia. (However, in the Pacific, the United States won its 1941-45 war against Japan practically alone.) On the other hand, the Vietnam War, which the United States fought alone (except, of course, for its South Vietnamese allies), it lost.

One of the odd and perhaps (but only perhaps) promising things in the history of the United States is this country's enormous vitality. Its recovery after the Civil War—yes, even in the South—was phenomenal. The recovery of the prestige of the United States after the lost war in Vietnam was also remarkable. A decade or so after that sorry defeat, the United States became the *only* superpower of the world, the Russians having given up on the Cold War (which, however, was not a real war at all). These recoveries have had something to do with the enormous size of the American population. Neither the Civil War (except for portions of the South) nor the Vietnam War involved more than a relatively small segment of the population able (or willing) to bear arms. But then, in both cases, the very composition of the population was also changing—due to mass immigration.

I am coming to this change of the composition of the American people, but meanwhile there is another comparison. During the 19th century, we have the first examples of American inventiveness. The steamboat, the telegraph, the telephone, farm machinery, and electric power were all invented by Americans. During the 20th century, the Americanization of the world has been implemented by the automobile, the airplane, movies, radio, television, space rocketry, atomic power, and computers, of which only one, the first airplane, was made by an American; the rest were invented by Europeans, then perfected and mass-produced by people in the United States. However, for the peoples of the world, these facts were, and are, irrelevant. The 20th century has been marked by the Americanization of the world. This was not so in the 19th century. The emulation and adaptation of institutions and things American were not widespread then. The advance of democracy—or, rather, of parliamentary government—across Europe and even elsewhere was marked by the adaptation of British or Western European institutions, not of American ones. In the 20th century, the opposite has been true. The conscious, or half-conscious, emulation of things American—even by hundreds of millions of split-minded peoples who, on one side of their brains (and mouths) profess to hate America—has been worldwide.

It is unreasonable to attribute all of this to American material power. The industrial age in America has been remarkably

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short: a half-century, at most. By 1956, *all* Americans employed in producing things, workers in agriculture and manufacture together, had become a minority. Since that time, the great majority are engaged in administration and in services. But then this is a worldwide (certainly a Europe-wide) phenomenon. It involves the image of wealth rather than the reality of wealth itself. It corresponds to enormous changes in society, including first of all the very lives of families. The decline of rural life and the growth of real wages 100 years ago had made it possible, for the first time in history, for the vast majority of women of the so-called working classes to stay at home. About 40 years ago, most women began to choose to work in offices and in other odd places. It is too early to say what will be the results of this so-called "emancipation" of women. It is not too early to say that this has developed together not only with the decline of the traditional family but also with the decline of the ideals of privacy, of religion, of respect for manners, morals, and law, and, yes, with the decline of proper education and of the general intelligence of a people.

Near the year 2000, the emulation of America everywhere amounts to the emulation of a "culture" of entertainment that is, essentially, puerile. Meanwhile, the very composition of the American people is changing radically. The 21st century will not only have a different history—it will be the history of a different people. Because of the still existing capacity of American mass culture to—at least superficially—absorb and assimilate masses of diverse immigrants, and because of the worldwide abhorrence of great wars, it is still possible that the Americanization of the globe may continue. Whether a very different American people will be able to withstand great natural or man-made catastrophes, we cannot tell.

Just You Wite, Maddy Hallbright, Just You Wite!

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

For Washington architects attempting the construction of a brave new unipolar world, the end of Henry Luce's American Century is not even faintly clouded by the suspicion that America (meaning what was reorganized in 1789 as the United States) has virtually ceased to exist, after a mere 200 years. And if America isn't America anymore, how can the 21st century possibly be American—even in the attenuated, globalized sense the Henry Ford of the magazine biz had in mind?

Ironically, the party fond of arguing that the United States is and always has been a proposition nation is now half right at least, thanks to the self-fulfilling power of persuasive prophecy. In place of what began as essentially an Anglo-British civilization, giving way after two-and-a-half centuries to a nation of predominantly Northern European character, we now have—owing to our immigration policy of the last half century—what amounts to no civilization at all but simply a vast political (and politicized) entity, an aggregation of deracinated peoples from all over the world closely regulated by a jealous, suspicious, and restrictive federal government driven by Progressivism, Inc., America's very own answer to Godless International Communism. No culture either, Hollywood movies, Manhattan books, Reebok, and McDonald's being products not of America's indigenous self but rather of corporate boards, mass markets, advertising, and Wall Street investment firms. To have a government, any ragtag assortment, however large, of frightened, lost, and confused people need only pay the exorbitant taxes required to sustain it and timorously abide by its increasingly tyrannical laws. To lasso a century (especially such a maverick as the 21st one promises to be) and put a brand on it, a civilization is required: a country with a strong cohesive identity of its own, and a purpose beyond mere money, ersatz culture, ideology, and power.

Meanwhile, American society, unsupported by civilization, continues to crumble, the Littleton massacre and copycat attempts counterpointing President Clinton's bombing campaign in Yugoslavia as violent anarchy at the bottom level of the social order continues to ape, as well as to reflect, chaos at the top. In such a place as the United States has come to be, moral dysfunctionalism produces a more general breakdown to the point where, as in countries of the Third World, *nothing* works at all—the utterly incompetent NATO military campaign, masterminded by Washington, being a case in point, since an aggressor too cowardly to risk casualties on its own side can scarcely be expected to excel in effective warfare. The creation last spring of the Balkan Action Council, urging NATO to send ground troops into Kosovo and otherwise pressing total victory at any cost, is in fact a panicked response to the prospect of military defeat in Yugoslavia, an end to American omnipotence and with it our "deterrent" power, meaning our capacity to bully on behalf of ourselves and our allies every country in the world that dares to break from our international progressive goose step.

America, which in less than 200 years evolved from the Hope of the World into the Leader of the Free World, appears to have completed its morphological development as the Scourge of the Universe, George Washington having been succeeded in due course by Macbeth. With Kosovo, we have finally overreached ourselves, through NATO, by what amounts to our leadership in an international coup. The world, however (including even some of the 19 NATO countries), cannot be expected to overlook our hubris and our arrogance—or forget, or forgive it. Somewhere out there—in the sands of Arabia Deserta, on the steppes of Russia or the Mongolian plains—an unsuspected counterforce is likely taking shape already, like Macduff's army of fir trees moving against Dunsinane. By the Yugoslav war, the American elite has almost certainly wrecked the New World Order it set out to enforce, complete, and direct; and if, early in the 21st century, the unregenerate Old World system doesn't come crashing down on their heads—and ours—we can all count ourselves very, very lucky.

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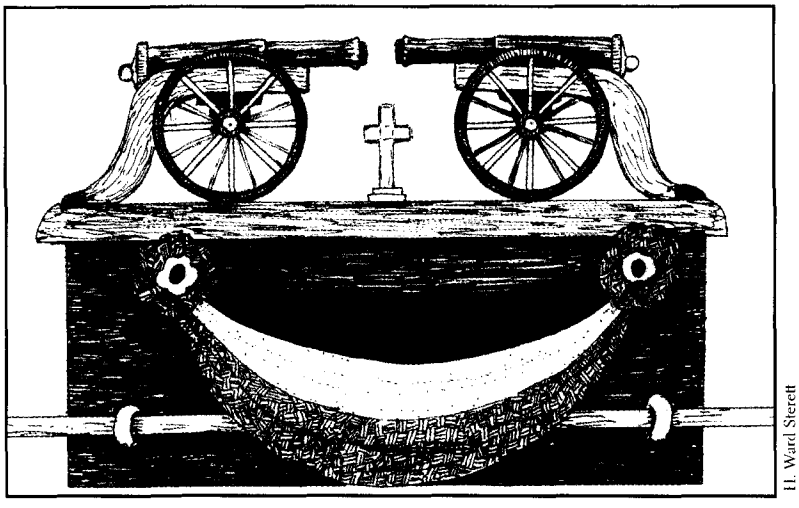
That New Time Religion

by Philip Jenkins



H. Ward Sterett

Americans in the 19th century had a confident pride that they would dominate the coming age, not only because of the immense economic power of the new nation, but as a natural outcome of its moral and religious strength. As Melville had written in *White Jacket*, "We Americans are the peculiar, chosen people—the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world. . . . The rest of the nations must soon be in our rear." Millennial hopes grew during the 1890's: The age to come would be "The American Century," and also, inevitably, "The Christian Century." In 1893, a World Parliament of Religions met in Chicago to celebrate the imminent global triumph not just of Christianity but of its liberal, Protestant, and quintessentially American form. The influential liberal magazine *The Christian Century* took its present optimistic title in 1901. Anyone who doubted the truth of this vision would be reassured by the vast achievements of Western, and particularly American, missionaries throughout Africa and Asia, and above all, among the huge population of China.

Looking back at the last hundred years, it would take a rare optimist to proclaim it a Christian century: From a Western standpoint, it has rather been an era of secularization, of steadily declining commitment to any supernatural system whatever. And yet those earlier visionaries may not have been as wrong as first appears. The 20th century was indeed characterized by an astonishing growth in the numbers and geographical spread of Christianity, which gained influence in Africa and Asia just as rapidly as it was losing ground in Europe and North America. Why, then, are we so blind to this historic achievement? Much of the answer seems to be that the religion currently burning its way across the globe is a traditional, enthusiastic kind of Christianity, spiritually dynamic yet politically conservative, and, for many reasons, this is anathema to Western elites. A West in spiritual decline confronts a wider world in the midst of religious revival, and neither understands nor likes what it sees.

The depth of the cultural schism was suggested last fall, when the world's Anglican bishops held one of their periodic get-togethers at Lambeth. The gathering made the news in a quite uncharacteristic way, as a public well accustomed to hearing the familiar denunciations of apartheid and colonialism was taken aback to hear a forthrightly traditional statement about the evils of homosexuality and the impossibility of reconciling homosexual conduct with Christian ministry. Western liberal churchmen of most denominations had waited for decades to hear the authentic voice of the liberated Third World, that radical prophetic voice which would challenge Western imperialism, and now that they heard it, that voice violated the most basic liberal principles: It was in fact very, very conservative. The response to the statement on homosexuality can best be described as incomprehension mingled with sputtering rage, nowhere more so than in the words of the arch-liberal gadfly, Bishop John Spong of Newark. In a truly offensive statement, he declared that these mainly African bishops were basically a primitive bunch who have "moved out of animism into a very superstitious kind of Christianity" and, therefore, should not be taken too seriously. The whole tone of Third World spirituality appalled him, as did the "religious extremism" which dominated the Lambeth conference: "I never expected to see the Anglican Communion, which prides itself on the place of reason in faith, descend to this level of irrational Pentecostal hysteria." His words recalled the bygone years in which black American spirituality was scornfully dismissed as simplistic holy rolling. The whole controversy over gays in the Church neatly illustrated the adage about being careful what you wish for, lest you get

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it: Be careful when you ask to hear the stark voice of the poor and oppressed; you may well not like what they have to say.

While the Lambeth affair made headlines and duly delighted Spong's numerous enemies, little attention was paid to the tectonic changes which it symbolized for the world's religious makeup in the new millennium. Westerners have long been fascinated by the impact of postmodern and feminist thought on their religious structures and have asked if, in the face of these challenges, Christianity can survive in any recognizable form. Despite these doubts, Christianity itself continues an amazing global boom, is situated to benefit from worldwide demographic trends, and promises to enjoy far greater influence in the future than it does today. Moreover, the shape of this emerging global religion is very much what Spong and his ilk would characterize as "irrational Pentecostal hysteria," and it is the postmodern and liberal trends which seem as endangered as the passenger pigeon. The world of the new century shows every sign of being a highly religious place, dominated by the great historic faiths: Christianity, of course, but also Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

Though the success or failure of a spiritual movement cannot be measured simply in terms of numbers, in this case the raw figures are startling. Today, six countries in the world have populations in excess of 200 million: In another century, there will be perhaps 14, and only one of these, the United States, will represent what we presently term the advanced Western world. China and India will continue to be the most populous states by far, with maybe a billion-and-a-half citizens in each, but rapid expansion will also occur in Latin American nations like Mexico and Brazil; Southeast Asian societies like Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines; and especially in Africa. By present projections, there could at that point be 500 million Nigerians.

Demographers are familiar enough with these projections, though virtually nobody has ever publicly explored their sweeping religious implications. Let us begin with what is now, and will continue to be, the largest religious structure on the planet, namely, the Roman Catholic Church. If we make the large assumption that the religious composition of these societies in another century will be roughly what it is today, then we already know that Euro-American Catholics will be a tiny minority in a Church overwhelmingly dominated by Latin Americans, Africans, and Asians, by Filipinos and Mexicans, Vietnamese and Congolese. It is all but certain that the 20th century is the last in which whites will dominate the Catholic Church. The situation becomes still more marked when we look at the "Western" societies themselves: By 2025, Hispanics and Asians combined will make up a quarter of the U.S. population, and a vastly greater proportion of American Catholics. To oversimplify, it is obvious to anyone with simple arithmetical skills that the Catholic future is brown and black.

Nor is this geographical shift solely a Catholic reality. Across Europe, the disposal of deserted churches of all denominations is a ubiquitous nightmare: Many become mosques. If present trends continue, Anglicanism could be the first of the colonial religions virtually to disappear in its imperial heartland, while it grows apace among the formerly colonized. As in the seventh century, Britain could be a rich mission field for Africa's muscular Christianity: Just when will the first dedicated missionaries begin their voyages from Lusaka to London?

Only by appreciating this historic shift in Christian numbers can we understand what is so often dismissed as the diehard obscurantism of the Catholic hierarchy, and particularly that of Pope John Paul II, who knows all too well that the liberal issues dear to American or Dutch Catholics are irrelevant or worse to the socially traditional societies of the global South. The ordination of women to the priesthood may seem an essential point of justice to Westerners, but it is anathema to much of the emerging world. This is why Catholic leaders tend to yawn when Catholics in Boston or Munich threaten schism: It is the so-called traditionalists, not the liberals, who are already playing the game of the new century. Adapting to become "relevant" or sensitive to the needs of Western elites would be suicidal for the long-term prospects of the Church.

The "traditionalists" also know that no church or religion has a guaranteed market share, and the fact that Catholics today predominate in (say) the Philippines says nothing about the state of things in 50 or 100 years. Across the regions which will be the most populated in the new century, vast religious conflicts and contests are already in progress, though these impinge hardly at all on Western opinion-makers. In Latin America, the battle is between Catholics and Pentecostals, while Christians of several shades vie with Muslims for African souls: Those 500 million Nigerians are potential prizes for any of the great faiths, though currently Islam stands by far in the strongest position. Even in India, a land soon to surpass China in population, a staggering one-fifth of the population are Dalits, the so-called Untouchables, who represent a very fertile field for organized evangelism by any major faith with the will to reach them: Will that be Islam or Christianity?

Though it is likely that Christians will continue to outnumber Muslims for the foreseeable future, Muslims across the planet stand to benefit from exactly the same demographic trends which are producing the unimaginably rich harvest for Christians. Most notably, Muslims will thrive from the explosive growth of nations like Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iran. Uncertain but intriguing are the prospects in vast but semi-closed countries like China, where, according to some estimates, there are already 40 or 50 million Christians, considerably more than in France or Great Britain, as well as tens of millions of Muslims. If religious restrictions were ever lifted in China, what would be the outcome of the contest? In numerical terms, China could easily become the world's largest Christian nation, the most populous Muslim nation, or both of these at once.

In short, the world is entering a state of intense religious competition which will determine the ideological and political map for centuries to come, a period of flux unparalleled since the medieval struggles which determined that European Christianity would survive the Turkish onslaught. And everywhere, the religions which are triumphing are unflinchingly traditional or even reactionary, preaching deep personal faith and communal orthodoxy, visionary charisma and clear scriptural authority, mysticism and puritanism. In this thought-world, prophecy and apocalypse are obvious everyday realities, while faith-healing and dream-visions are both integral to religious sensibility. Muslim, Catholic, or Pentecostal, these faiths are wholly uninterested in Western obsessions about gender and sexual orientation, or even liberation theology: The only liberation which matters is salvation. Still less do they mourn the death of God. Indeed, in the sense in which Dietrich Bonhoeffer used this notorious phrase, God is not only burningly alive across the planet, He promises to be ever more obviously and immediately so. But if this vision seems attractive or even intoxicating, we do

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well to remember that many of these religious battles will be fought both between and within states, perhaps with the full panoply of weapons now available to even small nations: The true age of crusade and *jihad* might belong to the 21st century, not the 12th.

Considering these changes, we cannot fail to be struck by the sheer pervasive irrelevance of white Europeans and Americans, and their failure to appreciate what is going on around them: The Lambeth statement on homosexuality should have come as not the slightest surprise to anyone who had taken the trouble over the years to observe the moral rigor of African Christianity. Not only do Western Christians not see the struggles in progress around them, they are actually hostile to the missionary endeavors which represent a primary battlefront of the emerging world. Seeing only the idealized Hinduism offered by academics and romantic New Agers, they would, for instance, be appalled at any endeavor to evangelize the Dalit peoples oppressed for millennia by the Hindu caste system. And anyway, states the multicultural truism, who are we to export our tainted views to anyone? Far better to apologize repeatedly to the supposed victims of our past religious colonialism: the first nations in North America, the oppressed in Africa and Asia.

Thus confined to the sidelines of history, Westerners are going to find themselves increasingly out of touch with the religious dimensions which shape the new world and literally unable to communicate with the new people of faith. We can even imagine a frightening worst-case scenario of a world to come, in which an incredibly wealthy though numerically shrinking Western population espouses the values of humanism, ornamented with the vestiges of liberal Christianity and Judaism; meanwhile, it confronts the poorer and vastly more numerous global masses who wave the flags not of red revolution, but of ascendant Christianity and Islam. Though this sounds not unlike the racial nightmares of the Cold War years, one crucial difference is that the have-nots will be inspired by the Scriptures and by the language of apocalypse rather than by the texts of Marx and Mao: We, the West, will be the final Babylon.

In January, Paul Lewis of the *New York Times* wrote an article entitled "As Nations Shed Roles, Is Medieval the Future?" which examined contemporary trends away from the powerful nation-state and suggested that a new world order might resemble the decentralized statelets and fiefs of the Middle Ages. Lewis interviewed pundits who speculated whether this neomedieval world might be hooped together by a common ideology in the same way that Christianity had united the earlier period: Some identified democracy and the free market as the future universal creeds, others favored environmentalism as "a global cause that transcends national boundaries." Given the highly secular venue, it is not surprising that no expert suggested the obvious candidate for the new Christianity, which is, well, Christianity. It is quite possible to imagine a future Christendom not too different from the old, and we can only hope that the new *Res Publica Christiana* does not confront an equally militant Muslim world, *Dar al-Islam*, or else we really will have gone full circle back to the worst features of the 13th century. The difference from the old Christendom, with all its universal pretensions, is that the new model is unlikely to include the liberal and secular West. "Western Christianity" might yet become an oxymoron.

Cedars and I

by John Nixon, Jr.

Cedars, though not of Lebanon, and I
(Nothing at all like Solomon) inhabit
My solitude. A temple, roofed with sky,

Contains our gnarled and shaggy presences—
Our evergreen if not as green as April
Insistence on survival. Hermit trees

And hermit, we at evening sometimes make
A little lonely hymn beneath the stars for
Whatever deities may be awake.

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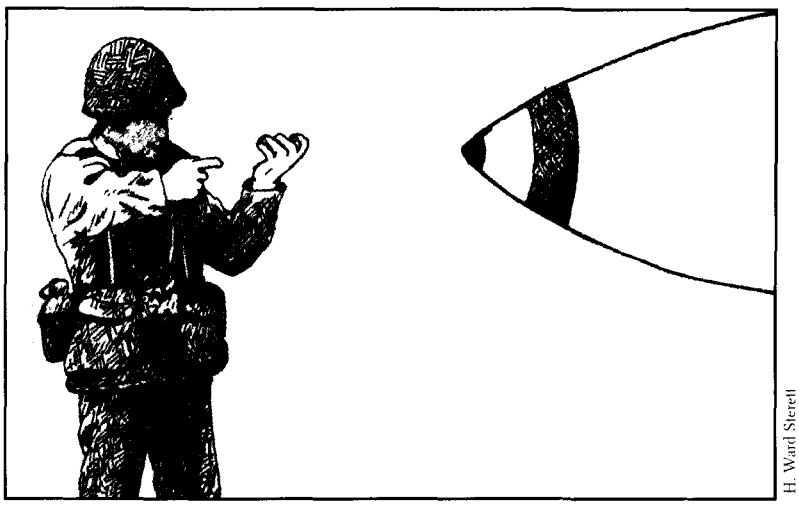
Not Ready, Aim, Misfire

America's Modern Military

by Christopher Check



H. Ward Sterett

Embarkation is the business of puzzling large weapons and vehicles, and the Marines that go with them, onto a ship that is run by a man who insists he does not have enough space for all that you need to take in order to do your job once he takes you where you need to go. Fitting four howitzers where three is a crowd is the most glamorous part of embarkation; the least is counting and issuing the sheets that your Marines inevitably will use to polish their boots or clean the deck of the berthing area once seasickness has set in. This is the good work that I was seeing to in August 1990, getting set to sail with my platoon from Okinawa to the Persian Gulf.

On the day the last truck was griped down, my battalion commander, the aptly named Lt. Col. Swords, called me to his office and handed me a copy of a Rudyard Kipling poem entitled "Snarleyow." Snarleyow is a horse, the best loved of a team that is charging, cannon and crew in tow, into action. "When a tricky trundlin' roundshot give the knock to *Snarleyow*," the poor horse is "almost tore in two." The driver cuts him free from the limber. In spite of his mortal wound, Snarleyow tries to follow after the cannon "as a well-trained 'orse should do." One of the crew, the driver's brother, asks the driver to "pull up" for the wounded horse. The driver responds that he would not stop a charging gun even if the driver's brother were wounded in action. In the next stanza, this very fate befalls the driver's brother: He is mortally wounded, and the gun crew

saw 'is wounds was mortil, an' they judged that it was best,
So they took an' drove the limber straight across 'is back an' chest.

The Driver 'e give nothin' 'cept a little coughin' grunt,
But 'e swung 'is 'orses 'andsome when it came to "Action Front!"
An' if one wheel was juicy, you may lay your Monday head,
'Twas juicier for the niggers when the case begun to spread.

The moril of this story, it is plainly to be seen:
You 'aven't got no families when servin' of the Queen—
You 'aven't got no brothers, fathers, sisters, wives or sons—
If you want to win your battles take an' work your bloomin' guns!

Lt. Col. Swords said, "This is the sort of urgency you need to instill in your own cannoneers." The poem is gruesome, but you can see why a young artillery officer would find it inspiring.

I am not sure how battalion commanders keep their company-grade officers inspired today, when "Take an' work your bloomin' guns" is the least likely of dozens of orders America's soldiers might hear. (In Somalia, it's take an' work your bloomin' soup ladle; in Haiti, it's take an' prop up your petty thug dictator.) And I would rather not think about what poems officers might be giving one another these days, given the open-mindedness of the Clinton administration. But it is clear that American military officers—and enlisted men—are becoming less and less inspired. They are leaving the service at the rapid rate of fire, and they are not being replaced. As Pentagon defense analyst Chuck Spinney observed recently, "the Army, Navy, and Air Force face the worst recruiting crisis in their history."

This news is met with grimaces by the Bill Kristols, Robert

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Kagans, and Sen. John McCains of Washington, who are eager for America to take up the cause of "benevolent global hegemony"; but at the end of "The American Century," for Americans who have grown weary of the White Man's Burden, and certainly for America's once and future adversaries, news of America's shrinking—perhaps withering—standing army might be met with a smile. The American Armed Forces face a readiness crisis that very soon will make them unfit for the tasks the Kristols, Kagans, and McCains have in store for them. Their "imperial vision" will be an imperial hallucination.

A report from the U.S. Army's Personnel Leaders' Conference held in March paints a worrisome picture. Lt. Gen. Ohle, deputy chief of staff for personnel, states, "the number one issue in the Army today is shortfall of personnel." Shortfall hardly describes it. Today, the Army is short 92 colonels, 251 lieutenant colonels, 408 majors, and more than 1,500 captains. (Note that there is no shortage of generals.) So severe is the shortage of captains that the Army has announced that "98 percent of First Lieutenants will be promoted to captain after 42 months of service." (At one time, the system of military promotions was something of a meritocracy—the slogan was "up or out." As one American politician has already observed, that slogan will have to be changed to "up *not* out.") The Army has also sent a letter to all captains who have recently resigned their commissions, encouraging them to reconsider and promising "increased [and] faster promotions to the grades of Major and Lieutenant Colonel," along with "schooling opportunities and multiple paths to career success."

In the Army's enlisted ranks, the news is much the same. Based on a dramatic failure to recruit soldiers in the first quarter of fiscal year 1999, the Army is predicting an enlisted shortfall of 10,000 by the end of the year. For the Navy, that figure was 7,000 last year. The services have not faced so severe a personnel crisis since Vietnam.

The news is not good for the Air Force, either. A message, dated February 1999, from Air Force Combat Command in Langley, Virginia, to Headquarters, United States Air Force, Washington, D.C., reports, "Air Force pilot retention continues to decline. The separation rate increased 9 percent in Fiscal Year 98 with"—this is alarming—"48 percent of eligible pilots opting to leave the service. Total Fiscal Year 99 pilot losses are expected to approach 2000. Additional losses are expected from post-bonus pilots."

"Post-bonus" pilots have more than 15 years on active duty. The Air Force has long thought that, because they are so close to 20 years active duty (when they will be eligible for retirement at half pay and the full range of benefits), they no longer require incentives to keep them in the service. This unprecedented loss of post-bonus pilots raises at least two questions: Why are pilots who are so close to retirement getting out? And how shall we describe the readiness of the Air Force when it is losing so many of its most experienced pilots? Less than half of Air Force fighter pilots now fit the description "experienced" (at least 500 hours in the cockpit). Outside the fighter community, the situation is more grave: Only three in ten Air Force C-130 pilots, for example, are "experienced."

The Air Force is predicting a total pilot deficit of 2,330 by fiscal year 2007. Where navigators are concerned, the picture is dramatically worse: By 2001, "54 percent of the fighter navigator force will be retirement eligible." The February 1999 Air Force message describes air battle manager (ABM) retention as a "challenge": ABM positions are manned at 72 percent, as are Air Force weather forecasters. In the tactical aircraft maintenance specialties, the Air Force reports not only personnel shortages but also "serious skill level imbalances." Air traffic controller positions are currently manned at 69 percent; half of them leave the Air Force after their first term of enlistment is up. (I remember an extremely bright kid I ran into when I supervised the operations of the Enlistment Processing Station in Milwaukee. He had very high math scores, perfect scores on the electronic aptitude test, and wanted in the worst way to be an air traffic controller for the Air Force. He was sent packing when he admitted during his physical that he had had a bad reaction to a bee sting when he was 11 years old.)

> Americans should brace themselves for a tremendous loss of life on the battlefield.

The significant personnel attrition in the non-pilot specialties in the Air Force gives the lie to the argument that the Air Force is losing all of its officers to the commercial airlines. But, take heart, benevolent global hegemonists: The senior Air Force brass assure us that "Ideas on ways to increase retention are being explored." Their latest idea, announced earlier this summer, is simply to forbid those personnel who are nearing the end of their enlistment or are due to retire, but are serving in specialties essential to the bombing of Yugoslavia, to leave the Air Force.

The recruiting prospects for the Navy are perhaps the worst of all the Armed Forces. According to *Newsweek*, "A recent Pentagon survey found that only 9 percent of young men between the ages of 16 and 21 were likely to consider joining the Navy." But the Navy seems to have clearer ideas about how to solve its personnel crisis than the Air Force. The Navy believes it can fill its 22,000 vacancies in the fleet by luring sailors to sea with "more television sets on ship" and "shipboard e-mail."

The Pentagon reaction—and the reaction from most American pundits and journalists—to these personnel shortages has been to blame our so-called booming economy, which offers a young man a better alternative than a military career. To believe this, however, one must assume that soldiers join up for the pay. There is little evidence for this. In fact, the one American service that has never sold itself as a place to earn great pay, or even as a place to learn job skills, is the Marine Corps. As you might expect, the Corps is also the one American service that is not suffering dramatic personnel shortages.

Ignoring this lesson, the Pentagon is lobbying hard to raise pay by as much as ten percent across the board. (Of course, this benefits admirals and generals the most, ranks in which there are no personnel shortages.) The Pentagon is also lowering standards. Weight and fitness requirements are being relaxed. Greater numbers of enlistees are being accepted without high-school diplomas. The effect? As one Army staff sergeant in Korea wrote to Chuck Spinney:

> the bad news is that the Army is in a position where we will not be able to get rid of our duds. As the recruiting

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standards are lowered, the number of duds will increase. I hate to say this so bluntly, but we are almost in a position where we have to kiss privates' a--es in order to maintain a certain manning level.

The material readiness level is no better. Everything, from jet planes to tanks, is routinely cannibalized for spare parts. Some defense analysts fear that the Navy is in danger of falling below 300 ships. (Remember Ronald Reagan's 600-ship Navy?) The Air Force reports that, in fiscal year 1999, "aircraft and engine overhauls are expected to be 25 aircraft and 106 engines short of need due to lack of spare parts." Grounding of Air Force planes for lack of parts is up more than 50 percent in the past decade, and, according to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Ryan, stripping planes for parts has climbed 78 percent in the past four years.

Although senior Pentagon officials are quick to blame the material readiness crisis on the budget cuts of the Clinton administration, this explanation, much like blaming military personnel shortages on a robust civilian job market, does not withstand scrutiny.

Blaming a lack of bullets on a shrinking defense budget assumes that the Pentagon is spending its hundreds of billions of dollars wisely. After all, there is no shortage of military spending: On the contrary, President Clinton's proposed fiscal year 2000 budget allocates nearly $300 billion for defense. The defense portion of the federal budget is greater than all the other portions of the discretionary budget combined; in fact, the United States spends more on defense than all of the other NATO countries (plus Japan and South Korea) combined, and more than Russia, China, and all of the "rogue states" (Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria) combined.

Does the defense industry lobby have undue influence at the Pentagon? Chuck Spinney argues that part of the Navy's potential ship shortage derives from the fact that perfectly good submarines are retired early to make room for the Seawolf and the New Attack submarine.

Marine Commandant Gen. Charles Krulak likes to tell the story of the young Marine who, when visited in his fighting hole in Kuwait by a U.S. ambassador, responded to the question, "If you could have something, what would you like to have?" with a hearty "Sir, I could use some more ammunition!" What Krulak does not say is that, not long after the Gulf War, the Marine Corps spent more money on family housing than it did on ammunition. That same year, the Corps spent more money on child-development centers than it did on spare parts. Another of Spinney's correspondents, an Army NCO in Korea, describes a dramatic gas mask shortage:

> A friend of mine at Camp Eagle told me that there is a shortage of protective masks; they have to borrow from other units when they go to the field. The rumor I heard about giving protective masks to family members is true. This is stupidity at its highest: bringing in protective masks for family members instead of evacuating the family members from a potential war zone. It would be cheaper to take the family members out of Korea. There would be no need for day care centers, schools, youth activities, or any of those cool things. The housing shortage would be eliminated. Of course, the wives would lose out on their opportunity to live like British colonialists in India.

The solution to the material readiness crisis is simple enough: Apply the logic of an infantry noncom and stop shoveling money into the gaping maws of our beloved defense contractors who push new weapons systems to replace perfectly good existing ones.

The personnel shortage may not be so easy to fix. There is almost no official discussion about whether the feminization of the American Armed Forces is causing good officers and troops to leave. There is even less speculation that soldiers are fed up with empire-building and OOTW (operations other than war). These OOTW have a debilitating effect on readiness even when they are not driving good men out. The more time a soldier spends in Somalia, or keeping the peace in Bosnia, or running the country in Haiti, the more time he must spend training to do his real job—kill people and break things—when he gets back home.

Kill people and break things. Take an' work your bloomin' guns. If America's Armed Forces are called on to do either of these in some way that involves something more than dropping bombs from a safe distance on hospitals, embassies, and prisons—if our "brave men and women in harm's way" are, in the near future, actually placed in harm's way—Americans should brace themselves for a tremendous loss of life on the battlefield.

Two things, the first less likely than the second, could avert such a loss. America's political leaders could adhere to "just war" theory; or America's political leaders could confine their military adventurism to what might be called a secular version of just war theory—the "Weinberger-Powell Doctrine." Weinberger-Powell presumes against war: Vital interests must be at stake; force is a last resort; crystal-clear objectives (including a solid victory) are required; the people and the Congress must support the action. Because our current war against Yugoslavia does not meet the Weinberger-Powell criteria, we should not hold out much hope for a resurgence of Saint Augustine's ideas, *either. If there is reason to hope that American servicemen will* not be killed in large numbers in the next big conflict, it derives not from the likelihood that men of good morals and good sense will keep us out of fights that are not ours, but from the fact that, since the Vietnam War, America's political leadership has been afraid to commit American forces wherever there is the least risk of significant loss of life. Recall how quickly we have pulled out of commitments at the first sight of blood in Beirut, Somalia, and elsewhere.

U.S. Army Reserve officer John Gentry made this very case in the Autumn 1998 issue of *Washington Quarterly*: "[I]n recent years the United States has extensively deployed military forces abroad, but America's leaders are increasingly reluctant to use them in roles that could lead to casualties in combat." Gentry, an unapologetic interventionist, fears this reluctance will

> encourage us to become yet more isolationist: with bruised feelings and a sense of paranoia about attacks, we might retrench even more deeply—intellectually and physically. Perhaps we will find security for our troops, if not our national interests, in the American heartland. They would be home and safe, but there might not be much reason any longer to have them in uniform.

Every crisis has a silver lining.

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Defending the West . . . Against Itself

by Srdja Trifkovic

H. Ward Sterett

In his article "A Just and Necessary War," published in the *New York Times* on May 23, President William Jefferson Clinton summarized the case for his war against the Serbs. He elaborated on his "vision," arguing that the bombing of Serbia was the response to "the greatest remaining threat to that vision: instability in the Balkans fueled by a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing."

Clinton's piece, predictably, teemed with the lies and distortions that are by now his hallmark; the article's misstatements began with the very first words: "We are in Kosovo with our allies . . . " We were also told that he is defending Kosovo against Milosevic's "Greater Serbia" and that, before the bombing, "we exhausted every diplomatic avenue for a settlement," but when the Serbs' premeditated offensive began, "we had to act." The President concluded that, had it not bombed Serbia, "NATO itself would have been discredited for failing to defend the very values that give it meaning."

While Clinton's various assertions about the background to his war were long ago discredited, he should be commended for his overdue admission—contained in the title of his piece—that it is indeed a "war" that he is waging. That war is both *unjust* and *unnecessary*, of course, but Clinton's claim that NATO (read: America) is defending its "values" in this war therefore merits special attention. What values? NATO is attacking not only Serbian buses, hospitals, trains, and TV stations, but also the "very values" that have given the West its meaning for centuries. It is attacking the very concept of the nation-state and the notion of the rule of law.

The War of Clinton's Legacy is the defining moment of our civilization and the supreme test of its chances for survival in the coming century. If Clinton wins, we all lose. If Serbia "wins" (i.e., keeps Kosovo and is not occupied by NATO), there is hope for America, too. The Serbs are the allies of the real America in this war; the attack against Serbia is a leftist-internationalist conspiracy to destroy the nation-state and thereby to demolish the very concept of the nation as we know it. It is being waged by the most corrupt administration in American history, by a group of people who are anti-Serb because they are fundamentally *anti-American*.

The concept of national sovereignty within an international system based on a balance of power among the major actors has formed the basis of Western politics, liberalism, and the rule of law ever since the Peace of Westphalia (1648). All of this is being replaced by the emerging Clinton Doctrine, a carbon copy of the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine, which was used as a pretext for the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The Brezhnev Doctrine introduced the concept of "limited sovereignty": that, by virtue of its membership in the "socialist community," a nation surrendered its sovereignty, which could be violated because the preservation of the monolithic unity of the communist block was the greatest good. In the same way, Clinton is using an abstract and ideologically loaded notion of universal "human rights" as the pretext to violate the law, tradition, and all established procedures of international relations. Both doctrines have the same objective: to negate the nation-state, to subvert the law, and to provide an ever-present alibi for the interventionists if and when they decide to march into Prague or bomb Belgrade.

This doctrine was applied by the Soviets in Berlin in 1953 and in Hungary in 1956, but only over Czechoslovakia in 1968 was it defined. The Soviets claimed that those who had entered the "socialist community of nations" accepted that the U.S.S.R.—"the leader of the socialist camp"—was not only the sole enforcer of the rules but also the sole judge of whether and when an intervention was warranted.

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Thirty years later, when the order was given for the U.S. Air Force and its assorted European minions to attack Yugoslavia, it was not issued following a declaration of war by Congress for "the common defense of the United States." Nor was the order given by the President as a means of repelling a sudden attack on America by a foreign aggressor, or as a measure intended to rescue Americans abroad from unexpected peril. The attack did not even follow the pattern set in Korea and Vietnam (that is, it was not initiated by unilateral presidential action). On March 23, the order to commence hostilities was given to an American general by NATO's secretary general, who directed the supreme allied commander of Europe to initiate air operations in order "to support the political aims of the international community."

We are not dealing merely with another instance of postmodernist newspeak, but with a fully developed theoretical concept. The Clinton Doctrine is rooted in the bipartisan hubris of Washington's foreign policy "elite," tipsy on its own brew of the "world's last and only superpower" and "indispensable nation." Albright, Berger, Cohen & Co. have their preferences wrapped in the rhetoric of the interests of the world, not of America itself. For the world's sake, we must take up the burden of "benevolent global hegemony," as the world's chief guarantor of peace, executor of justice, and champion of democracy and freedom.

"The international community" is now equated with the United States just as the Fraternal Alliance was identified with the Soviet Union. Never mind that China, India, and Russia are not on board: This "community" is of a mystic kind, blessed by the Absolute Good of democracy, human rights, and open markets. Mere numbers—of states or of people in them—do not matter. As for the democratic credentials of a government, they are easy to establish. According to the Clinton Doctrine, democratic governments act in accordance with "the will of the international community." When they do otherwise, they become *ipso facto* undemocratic, and liable to punishment.

What form will the Clinton Doctrine take? The rules are simple: Washington is the prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner. Legal formalities are passé, and moral imperatives—never sacrosanct in international affairs—are replaced by situational morality, dependent on an actor's position within the superpower's value system. The less logic and predictability on this point, the stronger the position of Washington. Deviants should, and do, feel constantly under threat. Minions who submit are able to enjoy the blessings of Double Cheeseburgers, Chuck Norris movies, and credit-assisted purchases of F-16s.

The resulting edifice hinges on the continuing technological and military superiority of the United States, not on its moral authority or political magnetism. America is obeyed because it is feared, not because it is liked. This enables the regime in Washington to act as it deems fit, without legal or moral restraints and with total impunity. Its minions are painfully aware that it is more advisable to share in the triumph of brute force than to attract suspicions of disloyalty. They are thus additionally corrupted by being cajoled to become America's accomplices, rather than its mere vassals. The victims are expected to understand that resistance is futile; the alternative, from last March onward, is to get "Serbianized" (in the same sense that *Koventrieren* was used by the Germans in the aftermath of the Luftwaffe's visit to Coventry in 1940).

Not all is lost, however. As a Russian commentator has pointed out, the Clinton Doctrine suffers from the same problem as the Brezhnev Doctrine before it. However costly for the defender, each act of resistance—Afghanistan in 1979, Serbia in 1999—undermines the attacker's *modus operandi*. If resistance is shown to be possible, America's image of hegemonistic invulnerability—which allows it to ignore or violate international law, traditional morality, elementary logic, humanity, common decency, and justice—is also subject to doubt. An act of resistance may shame others into action—or at least into free thought, which is even more dangerous—in defense of their forgotten rights and subdued sovereignty.

Behind Washington's façade of arrogant might, there is a morally bankrupt, intellectually challenged quasi-elite, incapable of producing anything good, beautiful, or true.

The monolithic gloss applied by America's allies, like that of Brezhnev's allies in the Warsaw Pact, conceals a potential volcano of popular discontent. After 1968, just beneath the drab surface, anti-Sovietism was rampant throughout the Soviet bloc. The mood in Germany, France, Italy, and Greece is remarkably similar today. The rot which is so comprehensively embodied in the Clinton presidency may take its toll sooner than we think. Behind Washington's façade of arrogant might, there is a morally bankrupt, intellectually challenged quasi-elite, incapable of producing anything good, beautiful, or true—not a sound base for the imperial project. But foreign policy reflects domestic policy, and the acquittal of William Jefferson Clinton by the U.S. Senate—ostensibly a domestic issue—has global implications. If he got away with *all that* at home, there is nothing he is not capable of doing abroad—especially now that he is neurotically obsessed with "his legacy." The lives and property of hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Albanians are nothing compared to the recovery of Clinton's "credibility." To paraphrase Madeleine Albright: "[T]he price, we think, is worth it."

Observing the sadistic pulverization of Serbia is painful, but at least it should lessen our anguish over the ongoing collapse of the "civilization" capable of doing it. There is some relief in that. NATO's war should make us less upset over each new minaret in Bradford or Berlin, each new course in literary deconstructionism at Yale, and each new recruit to the "gay" bars in San Francisco. This is less and less a civilization worth saving. From this "post-Christian," demographically moribund, spiritually arid, sexually ambiguous, utterly crippled shadow of its former self, only more lies and more humanitarian bombings are to be expected. So be it. From the distant descendants of the encroaching new barbarism, there may yet emerge—one day in the new millennium—new cathedrals, new Shakespeares, and new Bachs. ☙

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 1 No. 8 August 1999

Regular readers of this column are acquainted with the exact terms of the Rambouillet "peace" accords, which Serbia refused to sign, and for which reason it got bombed. The details of this American-sponsored plan are still unfit to print in the "mainstream" media in the United States, but the cat is out of the bag in Europe. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, *La Repubblica*, and others have written about "the plan that was not meant to be accepted." In Britain, John Pilger was the first to blow the whistle (*New Statesman*, May 17):

> Anyone scrutinising the Rambouillet document is left in little doubt that the excuses given for the subsequent bombing were fabricated. The peace negotiations were stage-managed, and the Serbs were told: surrender and be occupied, or don't surrender and be destroyed. . . . Nato's aim was the occupation not only of Kosovo, but effectively all of Yugoslavia. Nothing like this ultimatum has been put to a modern, sovereign European state. Of all the Hitler and Nazi analogies that have peppered the west's propaganda, one is never mentioned—Hitler's proposal in 1938 to the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, that Germany occupy Czechoslovakia because ethnic Germans there had been "tortured", "forced to flee the country" and "prevented from realising the right of nations to self-determination". As a cover for German expansion, Hitler was laying the basis for a "humanitarian intervention", whose fraudulence was no greater than Nato's cover for its own worldwide expansion.

Pilger singled out chapter seven of the Rambouillet accords ("Status of Multinational Military Implementation Force"), which says a NATO force occupying Yugoslavia must have complete and unaccountable political power,

> immune from all legal process, whether civil, administrative or criminal, [and] under all circumstances and at all times, immune from [all laws] governing any criminal or disciplinary offences which may be committed by Nato personnel in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia . . .

The accords also placed under NATO control the airwaves, broadcast frequencies, and "the entire electromagnetic spectrum." Pilger's conclusion is simple: "No government anywhere could accept this. It was a deliberate provocation."

To her credit, Serbia chose bombs, and the indiscriminate killing of the Serbs-as-Serbs (not merely as the supposed members of "Milosevic's war machine") was well under way when the *New Republic*, in its May issue, published an article entitled "The New Serbia" by David Goldhagen of Harvard University. Now, if you are intent on indiscriminately killing the members of an ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic group, the preliminary groundwork is always the same—whether your name is Robespierre, Dzerzhinsky, Himmler, or Albright. You demonize that group, dehumanize it, and proclaim all of its members collectively guilty of some capital crime—such as being what they are. In his remarkable piece of prose, Goldhagen provided a textbook case of collective demonization and dehumanization of an entire group:

> [I]f a people's self-understanding of self-determination includes conquest, mass expulsion, and mass murder, the principle of self-determination is rendered moot. . . . The majority of the Serbian people, by supporting or condoning Milosevic's eliminationist politics, have rendered themselves both legally and morally incompetent to conduct their own affairs and a presumptive ongoing danger to others.

Madeleine Albright is on record as having called "the Serbs" "awful," Richard Holbrooke labeled them "murderous assholes," and Senator Joseph Biden routinely calls them "illiterates, degenerates, rapists, baby killers, and cowards" on national television. With Professor Goldhagen, we finally have a quasi-scientific "justification" for this frenzied orgy of Serbophobia. His suggestion that Serbs should be "occupied, rehabilitated and punished" for their collective sins—so that Serbia could turn into a miniature version of Germany, which he terms "a force for democracy, cooperation, and prosperity"—also implies that they should experience Hamburg and Dresden if they resist. Roll out more B-52's, Wesley!

Speaking of General Clark, evidence is emerging that his treatment of the civilians of Belgrade, Nis, and Pristina was foreshadowed by a role in subduing the Branch Davidian aggression at Waco six years ago. According to Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair (*CounterPunch*, May 21), in the wake of the initial disastrous BATF attempt to storm the compound on February 28, 1993, Texas Governor Ann Richards asked to consult with knowledgeable military personnel. Her request went to the U.S. Army base at Fort Hood, where the commanding officer of the U.S. Army's III Corps referred her to the Cavalry Division of the III Corps, whose commander at the time was none other than Wesley Clark.

> . . . Richards met with Wesley Clark's number two, the assistant division commander, who advised her on military equipment that might be used in a subsequent raid. Clark's man, at Richards' request, also met with the head of the Texas National Guard. Two senior Army officers subsequently trav-

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elled to a crucial April 14 meeting in Washington, D.C. with Attorney General Janet Reno and Justice Department and FBI officials in which the impending April 19 attack on the compound was reviewed.

The 186-page "Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement Agencies Towards the Branch Davidians," prepared by the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and submitted to Congress in 1996, does not name these two officers, but *CounterPunch* implies that one of them was probably Clark. One of the officers had reconnoitered the Branch Davidian compound a day earlier, on April 13. During the Justice Department meeting, one of the officers told Reno that, if the military had been called in to end a barricade situation as part of a military operation in a foreign country, it would focus its efforts on "taking out" the leader of the operation:

> Ultimately tanks from Fort Hood were used in the final catastrophic assault on the Branch Davidian compound on April 19. Certainly the Waco onslaught bears characteristics typical of Gen. Wesley Clark: the eagerness to take out the leader (viz., the Clark-ordered bombing of Milosevich's private residence); the utter disregard for the lives of innocent men, women and children; the arrogant miscalculations about the effects of force; disregard for law, whether of the Posse Comitatus Act governing military actions within the United States or, abroad, the purview of the Nuremberg laws on war crimes and attacks on civilians.

On the subject of Nuremberg, the last surviving prosecutor from that war-crimes trial, Walter J. Rockler, strongly condemned Clark's and Clinton's war as illegal and immoral (*Chicago Tribune*, May 10).

> The planning and launching of this war by the president heightens the abuse and undermining of warmaking authority under the Constitution. (It seems to be accepted that the president can order his personal army to attack any country he pleases). The bombing war also violates and shreds the basic provisions of the United Nations Charter and other conventions and treaties; the attack on Yugoslavia constitutes the most brazen international aggression since the Nazis attacked Poland to prevent "Polish atrocities" against Germans. The United States has discarded pretensions to international legality and decency, and embarked on a course of raw imperialism run amok. . . . [W]hen we, the self-anointed rulers of the planet, issue an ultimatum to another country, it is "surrender or die."

That such conduct undermines the moral and social fabric of the country has been clear to traditionalist anti-imperialists all along. It is gratifying to find the same conclusion on the left end of the spectrum, in the *Independent* (May 23):

> Violence is horrifying but it is also exciting . . . Tony Blair's strictures against the media, when he complained about "refugee fatigue", ignored the possibility that violent acts by the state, legitimately reported by the press, normalise bloodshed by bringing it into our everyday lives.

What passes for France's intellectual scene these days was badly shaken by an open letter to President Jacques Chirac from Che Guevara's old pal, Regis Debray (*Le Monde*, May 13). Debray traveled all over Serbia (including Kosovo) in May; he also visited Macedonia and, witnessing the misery of the refugees from Kosovo, wanted to go to the other side to see how "that kind of crime" was possible. Uncomfortable with "the 'Intourist' way of travelling or journalist bus-cruises," he demanded and received from Serbian authorities the right to travel with his translator and his car, to stop wherever he wanted, and to talk to whomever he liked. His impressions were radically at odds with the received wisdom:

> It is possible to buy the foreign policy of a country—that's what the U.S. does with countries in this region—but not its dreams, or its memories. If you could see the looks full of hate that Macedonian customs officers and policemen are sending to armored vehicles and tank convoys, that are coming every night from Salonika to Skopje, looks aimed at the arrogant crews oblivious of their surroundings, you'd understand that it's easier to enter this battlefield than to escape from it. . . . Remember De Gaulle's view of NATO: "An organization imposed on the Atlantic Alliance that represents nothing but the military and political underestimation of Western Europe by the US." One day you [President Chirac] will have to explain the reasons why you changed this judgement.

When Debray asked a Belgrade dissident why Milosevic received an American delegation but not a French one, he was told, "It's better to talk to the boss than to his servants."

Debray's views promptly drew stinging replies from France's globalist liberals and neoconservatives. "Philosopher" and professional Serbophobe *par excellence* Bernard-Henri Levy entitled his reply "Farewell, Regis Debray" and called the open letter nothing less than a "live broadcast of an intellectual's suicide." But in an open letter to Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, a broad group of anti-interventionists—ranging from former Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson and some ex-ambassadors to filmmaker Costa Gavras and photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson—attacked the NATO campaign as the pretext for "a questionable new post-Cold War role" in a New World Order of which France should not be a part. The French squabbling over the bombing of Serbia has reached the point of vitriolic *ad hominem* abuse; even leftist sociologist Pierre Bourdieu—no stranger to intellectual sparring—has called for a "ceasefire" of rhetoric and some serious debate on the fundamental issues involved.

In the meantime, the "ceasefire" within America's intellectual elite—on Kosovo and on any number of other issues affecting the future of this country—is continuing, as it has for some decades now.

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Under Western Eyes

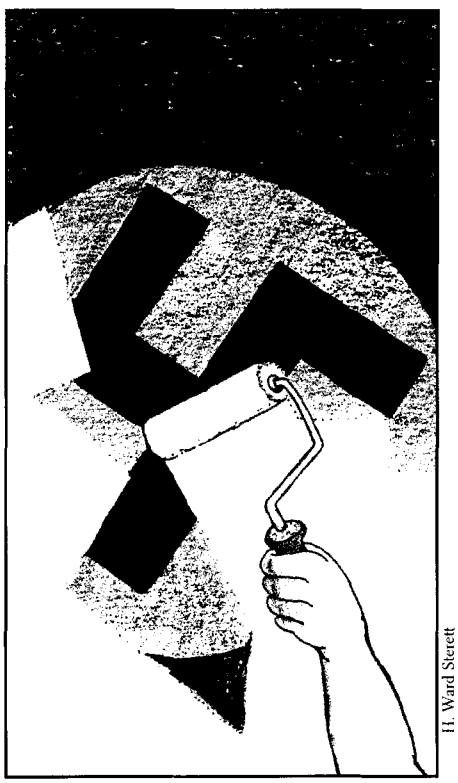
by Paul Gottfried

"When people talk of the freedom of writing, speaking, or thinking I cannot choose but laugh. No such thing ever existed. No such thing now exists; but I hope it will exist. But it must be hundreds of years after you and I shall write and speak no more."
—John Adams

The Commission for Racial Equality: British Bureaucracy and the Multiethnic Society
by Ray Honeyford
New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers; 313 pp., $44.95

***Die Diktatur der Guten:* Political Correctness**
by Klaus J. Groth
Munich: F.A. Herbig; 320 pp., $33.25

Sind Gedanken noch frei? Zensur in Deutschland
by Claus Nordbruch
Munich: F.A. Herbig; 313 pp., $32.50



H. Ward Sterett

These works highlight the jackbooted political correctness in contemporary European society and document the bitter observation of the German playwright Botho Straus that "the regime of telecommunication represents the least bloody tyranny but the most comprehensive totalitarianism in history."

Klaus J. Groth focuses most explicitly on the tyranny of politically correct opinion. Citing the ravings in the German press against nonleftist scholars and authors, the acts of vandalism unleashed by leftist activists—sometimes in full sight of a passive police force—against conservative publications, and the testimony brought against politically incorrect authors in German courts charged with protecting the post-war constitution against "extremism," Groth shows German society on the brink of total thought control.

To its credit, the most internationally respected German newspaper, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, has resisted the wave of leftist influence. Unlike *Die Zeit*, *Der Spiegel*, and *Die Tageszeitung*, to name just three predictable defenders of German leftist orthodoxy, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* dares to publish critics of the dominant political culture which, according to one of the newspaper's editorials, now consists of "the politics of arrest warrants, the pillory, and the spirit of police persecution." According to historian Rainer Zitelmann, who might be speaking about the United States as much as about Germany, "Conservative journalists, intellectuals, and politicians have been excluded [from the political conversation] and thrust into the vicinity of the far Right."

According to Claus Nordbruch, one can only grasp Germany's situation fully by looking at its recent history. The post-war German attempt to "overcome the Nazi past," originally inflicted on a defeated and thoroughly shamed nation by American and British occupying forces, prepared the way for the German embrace of political correctness. Educators and administrators, initially with some prompting, set out to "reeducate" an "anti-democratic" people and to replace an authoritarian German heritage with a denationalized "civic patriotism" (*Verfassungspatriotismus*).

Nordbruch observes that much of what has promoted leftist thought control in Germany did not always work in this way. Two government agencies now identified with censoring and criminalizing the intellectual right, the *Bundesverfassungsgericht* and the *Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährende Schriften*, once targeted enemies of bourgeois society. The latter, founded in 1954 as an agency for protecting youth against smut and defending Christian values, now goes after critics of the leftward-drifting political culture. Publications are labeled "dangerous to German youth" if they disapprove of Third World immigration and alternative lifestyles or discourage the expiation of the German right-wing past. Moreover, the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*, a court that worked to marginalize communist sympathizers, has remade itself ideologically: In the last 20 years, this tribunal has placed under special "constitu-

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tional scrutiny" what it describes as a ubiquitous right-wing threat to German democracy. Its reports dwell on the social pathologies, not yet sufficiently addressed by the welfare state, which have resulted in "legions of skinheads" and their intellectual supporters.

Groth and Nordbruch recount horror stories about political officials being forced to resign for not sounding p.c. enough, and highlight the bizarre case of Philipp Jenninger, the acting president of the German Bundestag who had to leave his post in 1988 after speaking unacceptably about Nazi treatment of the Jews. On the 50th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, Jenninger made the mistake of not delivering the conventional outpouring of German contrition in the ritualized way. Unlike former Bundespresident Richard von Weizsäcker, who repeatedly offered banalities about unconditional German atonement while reminding audiences that "Germany has now the freest state in its history," Jenninger decided to impersonate in a speech the kind of mindset to which the Nazis had appealed. Though German Jewish leaders praised this performance, Jenninger nonetheless was widely attacked in the press as "insensitively theatrical." As punishment, he was hounded out of national politics while expressing regrets about his misguided acting. Thereafter, the expression of German national guilt, especially by Christian Democrats, never deviated from the prescribed wooden language.

Nordbruch and Groth are fully aware of the American contribution to this oppressive situation. Both cite American influence on German political culture, and the dustcover of Groth's book includes the sentence: "Dictatorship has a new name, political correctness, America's latest attempt to improve the world." In the 18th century, it was believed that Europe caught cold when France sneezed; now Europe is growing delirious from a specifically American reign of pseudo-virtue.

Ray Honeyford's study of the English Commission on Racial Equality is both the weakest and the most compelling of these three briefs. Its weaknesses include awkward organization, plodding prose, and desperate attempts to appear moderate. According to Honeyford,until recently England represented the fulfillment of John Locke's contractual understanding of human society, but the country has been set adrift by the CRE, which has grown in power since its creation in 1976.

The Commission, by now made up largely of nonwhites, has extended its purview to all kinds of cultural and social activities. It has the power to censor a wide variety of publications, oversee the book selection and holdings of public libraries, and inflict penalties on those found guilty of abetting hatred against racial and ethnic minorities. The Commission can force business and educational establishments to engage in costly litigation if its members, on whatever pretext, decide to launch an investigation. Although many of the charges are thrown out of court, the litigation can ruin the plaintiff's finances and reputation.

While the present Commission has roots in an earlier one established by Parliament in the 1960's, it also has extended powers granted by the more recent act. The Commission is authorized to censor publications or go after private enterprises on the basis of "hate-inciting effects." The accused does not have to have incited politically incorrect feelings deliberately: All that must be adduced is the probable effect of a communication or act in order for the CRE to intervene. This assault on English liberty has gone on under Tory, as well as Labour, governments. The Iron Lady clobbered communist-dominated unions but did not take on the more powerful victimological interests embedded in her own government.

Neither Germany nor England has a First Amendment, which occasionally can be successfully invoked to protect the dissenting opinions of those on the right. This does not mean that the politically incorrect in the United States face no professional or social obstacles—nor that they are entirely free of government harassment. But it is still unlikely that 18,000 journalists and educators would be dragged before courts in the United States on charges of "popular incitement" for challenging governmentally established "truths." When large numbers of German authors were found guilty of "propaganda crimes" and imprisoned, even America's flagship p.c. newspaper, the *New York Times* (March 27, 1998), expressed shock at the destruction of German liberty. More German intellectuals are now incarcerated by the German state than under East German communist rule in the 1980's. Nor is it likely that our liberal newspapers would openly applaud the vandalization of ideologically dissident publications. When a conservative nationalist newsmagazine, *Junge Freiheit*, had its editorial office in Potsdam firebombed, adversarial journalists cheered this act as a preemptive strike on a returning German past.

In my view, the ideological lunacy set loose in Germany is not related necessarily to an ancient German heritage: It is the aftermath of the guilt and opprobrium which Western public opinion has laid upon the German nation. A morally concerned (and among Protestants, obsessively moralizing) people, Germans—even those who try to "contextualize" the holocaust—are preoccupied with the "burden" of the German past. Like its subjects, the government feels itself to be under constant scrutiny and is therefore less concerned about the freedom of Germans than about what the Western liberal press might say about German "right-wing extremism." Shame as well as guilt drives this repressive politics.

In England, however, the repression is even more striking. A nation without a Nazi past and widely viewed as the cradle of constitutional government, the English are now behaving as insanely as their Teutonic cousins. They have allowed their society to be taken over not only by an expanding managerial state but by the enforcers of multiculturalism. And unlike the Germans who glumly put up with the politics of contrition, the anglophone world, including British Canada and the United States, is into p.c. with a passion. While the stolid German opposition risks imprisonment by tweaking public censors, the English conservative establishment bubbles with enthusiasm for minority outreach and for "moderate" multiculturalism.

Of the English-speaking countries, Canada has by far the worst situation. When the Human Rights Code was introduced in Ontario in 1994, imposing on that hapless province a severe censorship in the name of "human rights," the response of the conservative and liberal press was predictable. Ontarians were urged to "assist" the government in combating "prejudice" in all forms.

Unlike the Germans, English-speaking peoples live in triumphant "democracies" which have won global struggles and are pursuing global missions. In these, one encounters "facilitators" everywhere, even among designated critics. Opposition becomes increasingly inconceivable to the extent that subjects imagine that they rule. ◁c

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Great Renormations

by Richard Cowden Guido

"Humanity must remain as it is."

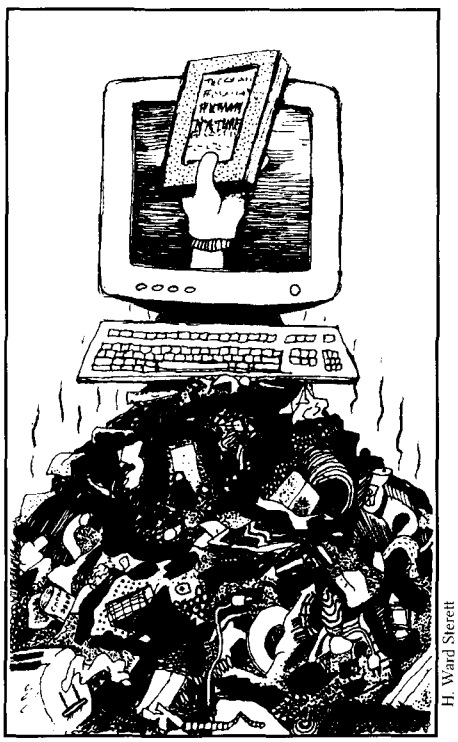
—Pope Leo XIII

The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order
by Francis Fukuyama
New York: The Free Press;
471 pp., $26.00

A sad thing about being American is that patriotism has never had much of a chance to find genuine expression in our souls, we having been taught that Americanism has to do with a love of our republican system of law and government (or whatever our system is) as opposed to a concern for deeper realities, such as that which brought Odysseus to tears in that fine TV adaptation when, after 20 years, he again tasted the cheese of his beloved Ithaca.

A Frenchman may be a republican, a monarchist, or even a communist; whichever he is, he knows it is a grand thing to be a Frenchman. Russians, Asians, and most Europeans resemble the French in this way, though with variations. While a study of these by someone of (considerably) more insight than Francis Fukuyama might prove fascinating indeed, the essence of patriotism is finally some *je ne sais quoi* quality, like that cheese.

That is why expressions of American patriotism always seem so forced and artificial. Asked to define his patriotism, the Frenchman would doubtless find the question simply irksome, knowing how inadequate an invocation of the cheese, or Charles Martel, or even Joan of Arc would be, not to mention the glories of the Fifth Republic. My own patriotism has, I think, something to do with William Faulkner and bourbon, a lake in northern Michigan and the Empire State Building, but the truest expression of American patriotism is probably fighting for Mom and apple pie. In this regard, George Bush the Elder's comment about thinking of the separation of church and state as his plane went down is surely exemplary and—since what he had in mind was probably the Post Toasties his mother fed him as a child—as touching as it was ridiculous.



H. Ward Sterett

The problem of patriotism becomes still more acute as American society grows increasingly coarse and culturally hollow, and a growing intimation suggests to us that, like the Soviet system Whittaker Chambers thought would ultimately triumph and no one (save possibly Ronald Reagan) thought would simply vanish of an afternoon, our own structure might be on the verge of an horrific collapse. Still worse is the suspicion that we deserve it; worst of all, the recognition that the crueler punishment might be the avoidance of collapse, allowing the coarseness, cruelty, and empty self-congratulation to intensify for decades to come.

Various efforts have been made to address such fears. Some observers deny the existence of danger; some give up, embracing and extolling the hollowness itself; many explore means to reverse the situation; while others—chiefly neoconservatives—insist that the means of reversal are already at hand, cause for a resurgent burst of patriotic pride.

Francis Fukuyama achieved some fame earlier in the decade by claiming that the glories of our present world—not Hitler's Reich nor the people's communist paradise—represent the fulfillment of Hegelian prophecy. Rejoicing in this truth, but aware perhaps of the uneasiness it engenders, Mr. Fukuyama has written another book in the hope of reassuring all who share his premises:

> [B]roadly speaking, the technological change that brings about what economist Joseph Schumpeter called "creative destruction" in the marketplace caused similar disruption in the world of social relationships. It would, indeed, be surprising if this were not true.

Mr. Fukuyama does not deny the

Richard Cowden Guido writes from New York City.

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severity of the destruction, whatever creativity it may bring in its wake. In plodding sociologese accompanied by dozens of charts and graphs, he simply tells us what we all already know: In the last three decades and more,

> the breakdown of social order is not a matter of nostalgia, poor memory, or ignorance about the hypocrisies of earlier ages. The decline is readily measurable in statistics on crime, fatherless children, reduced educational outcomes and opportunities, broken trust, and the like.

Signs of decay have been "dramatic, they occurred over a wide range of similar countries," and are

> marked by seriously deteriorating social conditions in most of the industrialized world. Crime and social disorder began to rise, making inner-city areas of the wealthiest societies on earth almost uninhabitable . . . Fertility in most European countries and Japan fell to such low levels that these societies will depopulate themselves in the next century . . . divorce soared and out-of-wedlock childbearing came to affect one out of every three children born in the United States and over half of all children in Scandinavia.

Prudently, Fukuyama declines to provide statistics pertaining to such matters as the decline of religious faith, the explosion of the pornography industry, and the literally millions upon millions of unborn children slaughtered to advance not only the lucrative profits of abortionists but a new conception of freedom itself.

Mr. Fukuyama posits a modern economic transition from the industrial age to the information one as profound in its implications as the earlier transition to the industrial from the agrarian age was; this, along with the birth control pill, he imagines to be the source of the creative destruction which functions also as a disruption. His analysis sets the modern agenda (unless, as Fukuyama possibly does not anticipate, you condemn contraception) beyond the reach of moral condemnation and of the moral argument advanced on behalf of creative destruction itself. It has as its premise what Chesterton called the great Darwinian principle of the survival of the survivors, or historical inevitability: to wit, that whatever happens in society is destined to happen.

Mr. Fukuyama exhibits a weak imaginative grasp in all this, as in his support for the strange argument that

> the feminist revolution was made virtually inevitable by the simple fact of increasing human longevity . . . by 1980, the average woman had 32.5 years extra to live—more than half her adult life—outside either her birth family, or free from the demands of raising her own children. Even if a woman wanted to devote herself to family, and even if the information age had not opened up so many new career possibilities, what was she to do with all that extra time?

Yet why might not the same development have made higher birthrates inevitable, or encouraged the social reintegration of grandparents in the task of raising children? Again, because these things did not happen, we are expected to believe they could not have and that the social forces working to achieve the present result must surely be benign ones.

Fukuyama repeatedly indulges in meaningless boilerplate ("society built around information tends to produce more of the two things people value most in a modern democracy, freedom and equality") while unintentionally revealing that, whatever our society is built around, it is producing a most vapid idea of freedom quite destructive of the real thing and an equality that exists only in our mutual suffering of destruction. He further claims that the

> market-based capitalist economic system that went hand-in-glove with political liberalism . . . created on . . . individualistic premises [has] worked extraordinarily well. . . . [U]niversal liberal principles have been surprisingly resilient . . . we can therefore expect a long-term progressive evolution of human political institutions in the direction of liberal democracy. . . . [I]n the political and economic sphere, history appears to be progressive and directional and . . . has culminated in liberal democracy as the only viable alternative for technologically advanced societies . . . [S]o close is the association between civil society and liberal democracy that [Ernest Gellner argues it is] a virtual proxy for the former.

All of his graphs indicate the opposite, but Fukuyama seeks to dispose of this salient contradiction by the claim that, while politics and economics are "progressive and directional . . . [i]n the social and moral sphere, however, history appears to be cyclical"; from this he concludes that a cycle of social strength ("growing evidence that the Great Disruption has run its course and that the process of renorming has already begun") is at hand. In evidence of "renorming," Fukuyama offers the recent decrease in crime—an argument which ignores certain painful racial implications, as well as the related decrease in the young male population (responsible for the vast majority of crimes in all societies since relevant statistics have been gathered) that is itself attributable to a proliferation of illegitimacy and fatherless children, the depopulation of Western society, the decay of marriage as an institution, the slaughter of millions by abortion, the huge profits of the pornography industry, and more.

Fukuyama's uneasiness reveals itself further by endless dithering about whether signs of disaster might be undermining our confidence in the glories of the age. Are "we fated to slide into ever-increasing levels of social and moral disorder"; are

> capitalist societies destined to become materially wealthier, but morally poorer as time goes on? Is the very ruthlessness and impersonality of markets undermining our social connectedness and teaching us that only money and not values matter? Is modern capitalism destined to undermine its own moral basis, and thereby bring about its own collapse?

Furthermore, Fukuyama asks, does

> going forward . . . promise ever-increasing levels of disorder and social atomization, at the same time our line of retreat has been cut off? Does this mean, then, that contemporary liberal societies are fated to descend into increasing levels of moral decline and social anarchy, until they somehow implode?

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That the answer to these queries might be "yes" *does* cross the mind—as Mr. Fukuyama, undermining his own purposes, tends to settle it the more by his embarrassing refusal to address, much less lay to rest, his own doubts. I was struck by the air of scientific analysis with which he delivers the grim news, in contrast to the simple assertiveness that only pretends to address that news: his apparent hope that, by dressing assertions in principles valid of themselves, the reader will fail to notice that these provide no evidence for the argument Fukuyama pretends to advance. Ignoring the experience of Russia, the Roman Empire, or less socially complex places like Rwanda, he argues, in effect, that modern society will revive itself because it will; because the

> situation of normlessness—what Durkheim labeled anomie—is intensely uncomfortable for us, and we will seek to create new rules to replace the ones that have been undercut. If technology makes certain old forms of community difficult to sustain, then we will seek out new ones, and we will use our reason to negotiate different arrangements that will suit our underlying interests, needs, and passions. . . . There is, in other words, such a thing as human nature.

Perhaps sensing this might not be quite enough smoke, Mr. Fukuyama wants us to note the not exactly sociological point that societies, particularly those of the United States and Great Britain, have declined and revived before. Indeed they have, but as those revitalizations were invariably religious movements at bottom and Mr. Fukuyama is openly hostile to the possibility of similar awakenings occurring in the present age, they are obviously irrelevant to his argument. (He does suggest that something called "religion" might be allowed to play a part in the Great Renormation as long as it is militantly devoid of any such unpleasantness as doctrinal content.) Generally, however, Mr. Fukuyama wants us to know that "God, religion, and age-old tradition . . . are not necessary."

Perhaps Mr. Fukuyama is just being patriotic—or just hoping to get paid—when he insists, against all evidence and argument, that

> the Great Disruption does not represent the finale of some long-term moral decline that was made necessary by the advent of the Enlightenment, secular humanism, or any other deep historical source . . .

but is instead the product of "much more proximate causes like the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, and the changes in labor markets this made possible." And though he grants that we "can accept the fact that capitalism is often a destructive, disruptive force that breaks apart traditional loyalties and obligations," it is only to drive home the point that "it also creates order and builds new norms to replace the ones it destroyed."

Well, we may all hope those "new norms" will not form themselves into a more formal police state to be wielded against those who doubt the value of said norms, but you can be sure that, if they do, Mr. Fukuyama will write a cheerful book about it, detailing the horrors and then explaining that, really, it was all quite inevitable and for the best, and besides, things are bound to get better still. Until then, his present work is sure to receive accolades from those who confuse patriotism with cheerleading, while sending the rest of us back to our Faulkner, hungry for cheese.

We Went Instead

by Robert A. Hall

Contentment would have kept us on the farm,
We could not place Khe Sanh on any map,
And war was not a glory that we sought.

But when the politicians called for men,
Well, Jack had said to put our country first,
So Lyndon's call and Richard's call were met.

We had no money on the farm, and that
Left Oxford and State U both out of reach.
And Canada? We'd too much pride for that.

It didn't matter to the Draft at all;
When someone ducked, another took his place.
The quotas all were filled by someone's sons.

We didn't have Dan's pull to join the Guard,
Nor Bill's connections with R.O.T.C.,
So we were called to take their empty place.

Now Bill and Dan are leaders in the land
And famous men. We are remembered too—
Our names are on a wall
—where famous men may pass.

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The Fire Next Time

by Gregory D. Palmer

Triumph of Disorder: Islamic Fundamentalism, The New Face of War
by Morgan Norval
Bend, OR: Sligo Press; 306 pp., $25.95

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Morgan Norval shares with this reviewer one characteristic both of us may soon have cause to regret: We live near Washington, D.C., one of the prime candidates for a major terrorist attack with unconventional weapons in the near future, an attack in which the victims will be numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Among those in the Washington apparat in the best position to know, a growing number talks *sotto voce* about getting out of town before it is too late.

The wake-up call should have been the World Trade Center bombing in 1993. The meager death toll obscures a key fact that has received insufficient attention: The United States already would have suffered its first acknowledged foreign terrorist strike resulting in mass deaths if the sodium cyanide planted with the conventional bomb had not burned but, as intended, vaporized as cyanide gas.

In April 1995, the *Baltimore Sun* reported that federal authorities at Los Angeles International Airport had apprehended two Japanese men believed to be members of the Aum Shinri Kyo cult, which shortly before had killed several people (again, far fewer than would have died if the attack had gone off as planned) in a sarin poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway. According to the *Sun*, the men apprehended at LAX were carrying instructions on how to make sarin and planned to hit Disneyland during one of the fireworks displays on Easter weekend, when the crowd would have been at its peak. The next day, the Justice Department claimed the whole thing was a false alarm. "It just didn't happen," said a spokesman. The Pentagon refused to comment, and the Japanese National Police chose "neither to confirm nor deny."

One is left with the distinct impression that something very significant almost occurred but that the authorities have about as much intention of letting the rubes in on this secret as on the persistent and credible reports of foreign (namely, radical Islamic) connections to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the 1996 TWA 800 explosion. After all, as long as all terrorist actions or intentions can be tagged on American retrogrades, the only reasonable response is more federal "hate crimes" legislation, more gun control, and maybe clamping down on talk radio and the Internet. On the other hand, terrorism, if seen as an imported phenomenon, becomes far more problematic for the regime, an indictment both of American immigration policies and of the glaring idiocies in foreign policy management. (With regard to the latter point, the Cato Institute recently compiled an exhaustive report linking the increased terrorist threat to Americans to our indiscriminately interventionist policies. As Cato notes, the link has been acknowledged by both the Pentagon's Defense Science Board and by Bill Clinton.)

Mr. Norval is the executive director of the Selous Foundation, a Washington D.C.-based think tank concerned with unconventional warfare, terrorism, and the collapse of societies and cultures. He has written extensively on subversion and terrorism in southern Africa, a theater that in many ways epitomizes the transitional phase from the Cold War to the current disorder, where the lines between state violence and private mayhem, between warfare and crime, are increasingly illusory. The African National Congress, now in power in the "new" South Africa largely because of the brutal deaths it inflicted on thousands of innocents, has become the legitimating example for such kindred groups as the Kosovo Liberation Army, whose commanders are being welcomed to the United States for "democracy training," Clinton-style.

In retrospect, the Persian Gulf War may have been the swan song of an international system characterized by confrontations between industrial states fielding massed armies on a defined front. The warfare of the future will increasingly be the province of non-state actors competing with both national governments and international entities like the United Nations and NATO in their efforts to intimidate enemy populations and to manipulate opinion through the mass media—as we have already seen in the Gulf War and the Balkan conflicts, courtesy of CNN. The result will be an intensification of the current international experiment in chaos theory: "There is a connection between the rise of terrorism," writes Mr. Norval, "the anarchy of the former Soviet Union, the riots in Los Angeles, Islamic fundamentalists poised to take over Muslim countries, and the local thugs who threaten your life and limb."

As the subtitle of Mr. Norval's book indicates, the forces of resurgent Islam will play a major—perhaps decisive—role in the unfolding era of turmoil:

> The infidel—those that aren't Muslims—fit the bill for the militant Islamic fundamentalist. In the minds of the radical fundamentalist, if one isn't enlightened enough to see the righteousness of Islam, that person is a subhuman being. The infidel is pictured as evil and loathsome, deserving to be killed as an enemy of God.

Just as the gutters and back alleys of Weimar Germany favored the hands—red or brown—tough enough to win a no-holds-barred fight to the death, the "triumph of disorder" will give a Darwinian edge to creeds that sanctify the most calculated application of violence and terror: survival of the most ruthless. It is only a matter of time before terrorists strike enemy civilian populations with the most fearsome weapons ever made, weapons which even the governments that developed them have hesitated to use.

The opportunities for the use of such weapons will rise as the population of the Third World becomes increasingly mobile. As Mr. Norval observes:

> There are over ten million Muslims in [Western] Europe and Islam has become the second largest religion in many non-Muslim countries. There are about five million Muslims in North America, and Islam is the second largest religion in both the United States and Canada. . . . During the next half-century, the world's population

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will double. . . . The population explosion will coincide with, and add to, the great migration of peoples. . . . This migration foreshadows another Islamic invasion of Europe. Demographers project the Middle East alone (including Iran) could reach a population of three hundred to four hundred million by 2030. . . . If large numbers of Middle Eastern and African migrants swarm into Europe in the 2000s and beyond, the result will not only be a migration of individuals, it will be a migration of Islam.

As Mr. Norval points out, the storefront mosques where the World Trade Center bombing was hatched are a sign of events to come. The proliferation of advanced weapons, the Koran, and the realization of a *Camp of the Saints* scenario: These are the makings of a deadly combination, advanced at every step by bad policy decisions made in Washington. In view of that fact, the locus of the next major terror strike might involve a little poetic justice—though Mr. Norval and I may find it a little too close to appreciate.

Gregory D. Palmer writes from Washington, D.C.

Crying Bloody Murder

by Andrei Navrozov

The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain
by David Cannadine
New York: Columbia University Press; 293 pp., $29.95

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The more a man of the world looks at the world, the more he is persuaded that not only are its political and social truths rarely what they seem, they are often the diametrical opposite of what they seem. So, in one memorable episode, did many an Englishman, a copy of the *Times* in one hand and a cup of milky tea in the other, remark with surprise that it was a Conservative prime minister, John Major, who first unveiled the plan for a "classless society," even as a Labour prime minister, his present successor, abolished the clause of his party's constitution that had been demanding, since 1918, "the common ownership of the means of production." A paradox, then? Not at all; only a repositioning of social fictions. Few have gone on to reflect that even as it was Major who worked to undermine the British constitution by locking up Parliament in a cattle car bound for Brussels, so Tony Blair now intends to finish the job, and has in the meantime hit on the simple expedient of locking half of Parliament out of Westminster.

David Cannadine is nominally an historian, but he thinks and writes like a sociologist. He wants to look at the evidence, perform some computations, and arrive at a conclusion. And yet he is not even writing the history of a period or a people, of an aqueduct or a cathedral, but of what, in the final analysis, is a term describing a perceived political reality, which is to say a mendacious fabrication by many a hand, known as well as unknown. What he has put before himself is an ungrateful task. Whatever political or social reality one chooses to consider, whether "class," or "democracy," or "sovereignty," or a myriad others, it is quite clear that what this sort of cool-headed, impartial, diachronic approach is bound to dredge up—even when only a decade or two of history within one's living memory, to say nothing of a couple of centuries, is on the research assistant's computer screen—are ossified lies and broken shells of old doctrines. In the writing of history, as in all treasure hunting, one must follow hunches. You cannot just dig.

Of all the weasel concepts one could mention ("freedom" perhaps the most notorious among them), "class" has a slipperiness that is uniquely its own. Given that every society that ever existed, in earthly reality as distinguished from a philosopher's dream, had the dimension of height—with a top, a bottom, and a putative middle—it is easy to show that an eyewitness, or rather a participating observer, had four basic ways of describing the society of his day in relation to himself. He could say that he belonged to the upper part, which was good (beautiful, moral, intelligent, well dressed, educated, responsible, and of course rich), while the rest was bad (unattractive, filthy, stupid, subversive, uncivilized, and of course poor); or that he belonged to the lower part, which was good (honest, hardworking, idealistic, loving, clever, and handsome, but perforce poor), while the rest was bad (idle, corrupt, cynical, stupid, and ugly, though admittedly rich).

Alternatively, he could say that, while he himself belonged to the upper part, he could testify that this was the repository of all vice (parasitic, perverted, deluded, unhappy, and not even noble enough to be admirable), while the rest of society was the repository of all virtue (happy, healthy, uncomplicated, generous, naturally aristocratic, and not so poor as actually to smell), with the implication that the life's aim of any virtuous man ought to be eventual devolution from that malignant stratum; or that, while he himself belonged to the lower part, it was thence that all vice proceeded (cue moral vacuum, unemployment and crime, prostitution and illiteracy, unrelieved tedium and despair) and that social elevation and eventual absorption into the rest of society (bring on higher education, useful employment, better medicine, higher quality of life, pursuit of happiness) ought to be the aim of every virtuous man's life.

In the 18th century, to these four basic vantage points and their *n*-factorial, or 24, theoretically possible permutations was added the middle class. Even ignoring this complication to the clockwork dichotomy of the high and the low, it is quite clear that much if not actually everything we know as European literature, political economy, and social history—from Marx to Tolstoy, from Engels to Disraeli, from Adam Smith to Lenin, from Fourier to Herzen, from Dickens to Keynes, from Beatrice Webb to Margaret Thatcher—is made up of one or another set of lapidary variations on what is at bottom a simple Manichaean movement. And, in practical terms, the new addition changed little of the established conventions of collective or individual self-aggrandizement and self-abasement.

Interestingly enough, the credit for inventing the term "the middling class," used for the first time in *Clarissa*, goes to Samuel Richardson, second only to Shakespeare in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the number of literary phrases that have become part of the national fabric of thought and speech. This is significant because, as first employed, the term was an innovation, an admirable and characteristically Richardsonian attempt to break out of the Manichaean circle of us and them, wealth and poverty, innocence and experience, nature and nur-

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ture, good and evil. Of the many illuminating contemporary references in Professor Cannadine's book, I would only single out Dr. Johnson's view of "class" as equally sagacious, insofar as the author of the *Dictionary of the English Language* believed in

> "the fixed, invariable external rules of distinction of rank, which create no jealousy as they are allowed to be accidental," by which he meant they were beyond human intervention or alteration because they were God's will and God's work.

Elsewhere, perhaps, in Edmund Burke if not in Thomas Paine, in Thomas Jefferson if not in William Cobbett, though most probably in the work of novelists and diarists rather than that of scholars or politicians, one can find scattered other adducible instances of men transcending the vicious juxtaposition. But just about everybody on record writing directly on the subject, from Adam Smith onward, seems to belong to that line-drawing, finger-pointing, name-calling school of social classification which became famous the world over in the wake of the French and, later, of the Russian Revolution. Name your class, citizen! Identify your class enemy, and a small part of his money, of his property, and of his social prestige may become yours. Who knows, perhaps even his old *dacha*. "There are many ironies here," comments Professor Cannadine, not least among them the fact that

> Karl Marx, the man Lady Thatcher claims most to hate, derived his basic models of social structure and social identity, models that she so deplores and abominates, from the works of Adam Smith, a man whom she so admires. For the idea that society should be understood in terms of collective and conflicting social groups—sometimes three and sometimes two, sometimes expressed in the language of class but sometimes not—was well established as a capitalist concept long before it was appropriated as a communist concept. Far from being invented by a nineteenth-century revolutionary who looked forward to a proletarian utopia and a classless society, it had first appeared in a book by a Scottish political economist who was steeped in the hierarchical view of society.

Such ironies aside, and apart from its general usefulness as a reminder that the history of European social thought is nothing but a dense web of self-serving, self-perpetuating, and at the same time self-incriminating, almost childish lies, Professor Cannadine's book remains an assemblage of interesting quotations, facts, and suppositions without ever becoming what it should have been even before it was begun: namely, a contention, an indictment, or a thesis. To resume the analogy with which this review began, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* is like the concerned Englishman's observation that all of a sudden not everything is going quite as expected, what with a Conservative prime minister mouthing Marxist slogans while his Labour successor is removing Marxist signposts. True enough, but the contention one yearns to see proved is the equivalent of the terrible truth that a man engaged in the crime of murder has two bloody hands, one right and the other left.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

RECEIVED WISDOM

Quel avenir pour Vatican II? by Claude Barthe. Paris: Francois-Xavier de Guibert (3, rue J-F. Gerbillon, 75006 Paris), 120 f.

The Abbe Barthe is a well-known conservative Catholic scholar in Paris. His recent book on Vatican II, written with a critical intelligence and restraint that is increasingly rare, points to many unanswered questions in the Church's project of modernization—or self-destruction. Barthe is also on the editorial board of *Catholica*, a solid and scholarly journal of opinion published three times a year. A recent number takes up the question of progressivism and includes an essay on technology by Thomas Molnar and editor Bernard Dumont's trenchant editorial on relativism: "The more we travel in the direction of the glorious future promised by a unified and programmed planet earth, the more we must understand that we are required to pay the price . . . to make our minds supple and malleable in order to eliminate any obstacle to the progress of the new civilization."

Catholica, Printemps 1999.

The Spring 1999 number of *Catholica*, "*Vers Une Eglise Vassalisée*," includes a number of provocative pieces by Claude Barthe, Bernard Dumont, Thomas Molnar, and Günter Maschke (among others) on a set of not entirely unrelated topics: the subjugation of the Church to modernist ideology, the American political ideology, and several German questions (including Molnar's discussion of Ernst Junger's conversion). This issue also contains an interview with *Chronicles*' editor Thomas Fleming on "the American mission." His eloquence in French (translated) confirms the Thurber cartoon: "He loses something in the original."

Against the Odds: In Honor of the Nativity by Harold Grier McCurdy. Charlotte: Briarpatch Press.

Chronicles readers, who are familiar with Mr. McCurdy's quiet and elegant verse, will wish to read his musings on Christmas. Here is the last stanza of "A Cold Christmas":

> Till starlight and lovelight entirely cease
> He lives with us, our Prince of Peace,
> And neither snow nor gallows can
> Sunder us from the Son of Man.

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by Samuel Francis

I Was a Teenage Werewolf

"When I think back on all the crap I learned in high school . . . ," Paul Simon mused in a popular song some years ago. Simon, of course, was in high school long before multiculturalism, Afrocentrism, Outcome-Based Education, bilingual education, Heather Has 17 Mommies, Holocaust Studies, and assorted therapeutic group gropes and mass séances in "counseling" displaced the deathless vapidities about history, life, and literature that typically spill from the lips of teachers in all ages and nations. But no matter what sort of crap Simon endured in his high school and what sort poisons the minds and spirits of teenagers today, it is nothing compared to the offal that the American news media regularly inject into grown-ups and anyone else who pays attention to them.

The mass murder of 12 students at Littleton, Colorado's Columbine High School on April 20 was the occasion for the construction of a veritable mountain of journalistic chicken doodle by almost every major newspaper and news service in the world. The blood had not stopped flowing before the ace reporters and investigative journalists had the whole gory mess all figured out and ready to serve hot and piping to a gape-jawed public. As it turned out, almost everything they reported was wrong—some of it almost certainly deliberately wrong—and not only wrong, but a carefully crafted wrongness that pointed in the exact opposite direction of the truth about Littleton and a lot of other things in the United States that it is important for some people to hide.

The two teenage killers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, an Associated Press story told us on April 21, were "said to be part of an outcast group with right-wing overtones called the Trenchcoat Mafia." "Students said the group was fascinated with World War II and the Nazis and noted that Tuesday [April 20] was Adolf Hitler's birthday," it continued. The same day, yet another AP story described the "Trenchcoat Mafia" as a group that "hated blacks, Hispanics, Jews and athletes." A student named Aaron Cohn, repeatedly quoted in several stories, claimed the "Mafia" "often made anti-Semitic comments"; he was the apparent source of the story that the killers had called the black student they murdered by a racial epithet, while other students said the group or the killers themselves wore "Nazi crosses" and "'made generally derogatory remarks' about Hispanics and blacks." "They talked about Hitler and wore clothes with German insignia," gasped the *New York Times* on April 23. "They hated jocks, admired Nazis and scorned normalcy. . . . They were white supremacists. . . ," the *Washington Post* bubbled the same day.

And so it went for the next week or so, with proponents of more gun control, more voodoo education, more hate-crime laws, and more federal manipulation of schools, law enforcement, and families flapping their wings and their jaws overtime, intent on squeezing every possible ounce of political advantage from what the press at once dubbed "the worst attack on a school in American history." Even that wasn't true. In 1927, a school board member named Andrew Kehos planted several dynamite bombs under his local schoolhouse in Michigan and blew it to splinters, killing himself and 45 other people, including 38 students. Whether Mr. Kehos was also reported to have "right-wing overtones" and to be a "white supremacist" is not known, but that atrocity committed by a lunatic, like most others in civilized countries, was soon forgotten.

The Littleton massacre wasn't forgotten, at least not for several weeks after it happened, and it soon became clear that the media were trying to use it in almost exactly the same way they had exploited the Oklahoma City bombing of April 19, 1995. They were setting a Reichstag fire, creating a vast and elaborate lie that sought to pin the blame for the Littleton massacre on "the right."

But the Littleton Lie couldn't last because it was just so contrary to certain facts that soon began to emerge from the carnage, and in any case, the Lie was largely irrelevant to the main political usage of the massacre, more gun control. Yet the major media kept the Littleton incident on their front pages for at least two weeks after it occurred; it was only when the facts did emerge that they lost interest in it and the story began to follow Mr. Kehos and his dynamite bombs into that subcontinent of oblivion reserved for inconvenient facts and truths. The facts, you see, not only gave the lie to the Littleton Lie but pointed to a truth the news media didn't want to bring up.

One glimpse of reality began to creep onto the national screen when the contents of Eric Harris's website were released. Those contents had been reported to the local police by an alarmed parent more than a year before young Master Harris tripped over the edge on April 20, but the cops had ignored them. As soon as the massacre occurred, however, America Online shut down the Harris website, and no one got a gander at what was on it until the *New York Times*, to its credit, reported at least some of the contents on May 1.

The *Times* found the following passage, written by Harris, "intriguing": "You know what I hate?" Harris "repeatedly asked readers of the site," the *Times* reported. "One of the answers he gave was, 'RACISM!'" "He wrote that people who are biased against 'blacks, Asians, Mexicans or people from any other country or race besides white-American' should 'have their arms ripped off' and be burned." "'Don't let me catch you making fun of someone just because they are of a different color,' he wrote." Young Master Harris, it turns out, hated many things besides "RACISM," among them fans of "Star Wars," people who mispronounce words, liars, country music, freedom of expression, opponents of the death penalty, and smokers. But "RACISM," so far from being a creed to which he subscribed, was definitely on the enemies' list.

As for Dylan Klebold, it soon came out that he was of Jewish background and that his grandfather had been a prominent Jewish philanthropist in Ohio. In fact, young Master Klebold was reported to have taken part in a Passover seder only shortly before the massacre. Whatever motivated him to splatter the schoolhouse with the brains of his pals, it probably wasn't the admiration for Hitler and the Nazis that the press had attributed to him and his colleague, nor did Eric Harris's website reveal any sympathy for Hitler or for "racism" or indeed for any

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"right-wing overtones" except perhaps his enthusiasm for capital punishment.

But what finally and definitely exposed the fantasies, speculations, unexamined assumptions, and outright lies the news media concocted and inflicted on us for two weeks was an interview in the *New York Times* on April 30 with several students at the high school who had actually known the killers. What they had to say should have ended the professional careers of several of the con artists who pass themselves off as "reporters" and whose misreporting had already fabricated myths and legends about the Littleton killings that will probably never die completely.

The infamous "Trenchcoat Mafia" that was supposedly behind the bloodshed, said 16-year-old Devon Adams, consisted last year of about 15 or 20 people who wore black trenchcoats as a kind of clique uniform. They played cards and hung out and smoked together. "That's all it was," and anyway, more than half of them had graduated last year; the group barely existed anymore. Harris and Klebold weren't even part of it, he told the *Times*.

Well, but what about the racism, the sympathy for Hitler, the obsession with World War II? Meg Hains, 17, said,

> I am black/white mixed. And when the media is coming up with this thing that Dylan and Eric were racist, they weren't. They were my friends. They were very nice to me, both of them. I don't get this whole racial thing that people are coming up with.

Miss Hains, you can see, has a lot to learn, and no doubt a good deal of the remainder of her learning experience will be devoted to "getting" the "whole racial thing" with which her elders are so obsessed. Devon Adams acknowledged that Harris and Klebold did use "racial slurs," but "I don't think it meant that they were racist." "What about the Nazi stuff?" the Times insisted. Meg Hains replied, "That is the biggest load of [expletive] I've ever heard. They never wore swastikas around their arm[s]. Never. Not in this entire year that I've known them. No." Devon Adams said, "They're not Nazis. They didn't worship Nazis." They read books about Nazis because they were studying World War II history in school, he said. The report that they shouted "Heil Hitler" when bowling was also untrue, said Dustin Thurman, 18.

In short, when the press told the public that Harris and Klebold were "white supremacists," "right-wingers," "racists," "neo-Nazis," etc., they lied. Journalists assumed, probably because unconsciously they have come to believe their own propaganda line, that all mass violence is the work of the "right," a catch-all term that can include anyone from Elizabeth Dole to the Aryan Nations. If it's the assassination of a president, the bombing of a federal building, or the mass murder of high-school students by wigged-out teenagers full of pubescent resentment, plugged-up hormones, and the mental and moral garbage regularly served them by their schools, their televisions, their movies, their music, their books, their government, and their newspapers, then it has to be because "the right" is on the march. And of course, this myth is useful for discrediting anyone who really is on "the right" when he questions the quack nostrums and increased state power that the left demands as a "solution" to the "crisis."

What, then, did cause the massacre at Littleton? The simple answer is "human nature," the propensity that all human beings have to explode, as Mr. Kehos exploded back in 1927 and as lots of other people do in one way or another every now and then. Of course, not everybody does explode. Why did Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold do so?

The question is probably still unanswerable, but one story that popped up in the *Washington Post* is suggestive. A woman who was a friend of the Klebold family recalls that Dylan used to play with her daughters and remembers telling his mother that in her house she had only girl toys while in your house, you have only "boy toys." "Boy toys," replied Mrs. Klebold, "but no toy guns."

Dylan Klebold's father is said to be "a liberal who favors gun control," yet another Associated Press story reported several days after the killings. His mother worked in a community program that helped "disabled students gain access to education." When Dylan and Eric broke into a car and got caught, they were placed in an "anger management" program, and the police who ran the program praised them for their conduct. As for Mark Manes, the pal of Eric and Dylan who sold them the semi-automatic pistol they used in the shootings, his mother is a member of Handgun Control, Inc., the country's largest gun-control lobbying organization. "She has been against guns forever," Manes' lawyer told the *New York Times*. "Mark grew up in a house where no weapons were present." Much the same seems to have been true of Eric Harris, who was an enthusiastic fan of Bill Clinton's bombing of Serbia. "I hope we do go to war," he told a classmate. "I'll be the first one there." That's exactly why Harris tried to enlist in the Marines a few days before the blow-up at school. Maybe it wasn't Marilyn Manson that lit his fuse so much as the *Weekly Standard* or the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page.

The dirty little truth the American propaganda machine won't tell us directly, the secret that has to be pried out from between the lines of the machine's unreliable newspapers and thinly disguised politicization, is that all three of these young men grew up in the make-believe world concocted by liberalism, a fantastic place where race and sex mean nothing; where violence and crime don't exist and guns have no function and no meaning, even as toys; where wars against "ethnic nationalists" for "humanitarian goals" are morally imperative but owning a handgun to protect your home and family ought to be a crime; where war is only one more goody-good community project like getting disabled students access to education; where people who adhere to "RACISM!" deserve to have their arms ripped off and be burned and human beings, including healthy young men whose genes and glands and brains drive them to aggression and conflict, are simply blank slates to be shaped and twisted and scribbled over by "anger management" programs and all the therapeutic witchcraft that Hillary Clinton and her friends really believe in. It was not Adolf Hitler or Marilyn Manson or guns or the "right" that made Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold pop their corks in April but liberalism itself and all the illusions liberalism conjures up to mask the truths about human beings and human society that it refuses to face. That's a secret the news media can't expose, partly because those who run them can't even recognize it and partly because, if they ever did, the whole system constructed on the lies of liberalism would crumble. ©

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Letter From South America

by Jeffrey Meyers

Cruising the Amazon

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"Here the people could stand it no longer,
And complained of the long voyage."
—Christopher Columbus

Vacations follow fashion, like everything else, and now cruising is back. Full employment, cheap oil, a flush Wall Street—the problem is what to spend it on. And think of the *Titanic*. Never mind that it sank. Those passengers were so elegant, so romantic, so pampered. Don't we deserve some of that good life?

I recently had an irresistible offer. The director of cultural affairs (or public-relations man) of a Greek cruise line called me. He had read my biography of Hemingway and liked it. He was looking for a few good men—or women—to entertain the passengers on an upcoming cruise to the Amazon over the Christmas holidays. In exchange for three lectures about South America, my daughter, my wife, and I would get a 12-day luxury cruise from Guadeloupe in the West Indies to Manaus, a thousand miles up the river, in Brazil.

This promised to be an exceptional voyage. Not only would we be on the first ocean liner to sail the Amazon, but there would be other lecturers on board: a scientist who would explain the ecology of the river and an astronomer who would point out the stars, especially Halley's Comet, which was making a rare pass round the earth and would be visible in the Southern Hemisphere. As well as the usual dance band, we would have some classy young musicians on the trip: a soprano, a tenor, and an émigré Russian pianist.

However much you have traveled—and we had been around the world twice in our youth, with no guidebook and very little money—cruising suggests elegance, glamour, and the traditional trappings: the captain's table, officers in neat uniforms, evening gowns, fancy dress parties, ballroom dancing, stewards serving beef tea, trap shooting, deck quoits (whatever that is). We looked forward to traveling to exotic places, being catered to, having no responsibilities and meeting new people, perhaps even strange or romantic ones. My wife scanned her wardrobe (faded jeans and sweaters) and bought a cocktail dress. The daughter got some out-of-season shorts. I took my suit to the cleaners.

The trip began in Miami, where we looked cautiously at our fellow passengers (identifiable by their luggage tags) as we waited for the charter flight to Guadeloupe. We had plenty of time to scrutinize each other—11 hours, as it turned out. There was no explanation for the delay, nor any prediction of when we would leave. It was like traveling on Aeroflot. The cruise line was hopelessly disorganized, tried to do everything on the cheap, and was not especially concerned with the welfare of the passengers. Tempers frayed, and we settled into the complaining mode typical of a large group of thwarted Americans out to have a Good Time.

Our flight was due to leave at two in the afternoon and reach Guadeloupe at six. We were to be whisked to dinner on the ship and spend the evening seeing the island. Instead, after a chaotic check-in (more bad vibes all round—we would have 12 days to remember *who* pushed ahead of the old ladies in the line), our flight finally left in the middle of the night and arrived at five in the morning. Guadeloupe was a pastel-washed town in the bleary dawn, and every French shutter was firmly closed. Somehow the crew—as sleepy and exasperated as we were—got us all into our cabins, and we fell asleep.

We were summoned to breakfast at eight, after only three hours in bed, on the Orwellian intercom we came to despise. How could they do this to us? In the morning light, our outside cabin looked poky and cramped, the narrow shower required some skill to negotiate, and our toiletries obstinately slid into the sink. But we thought we'd better get some food, our first real meal in 24 hours. So we made our way to the dining room, where a ragged crowd was eating scrambled eggs. No sooner were forks raised to lips when the alarm sounded and the waiters urged us to our lifeboat stations. Some passengers obeyed, but most either went on eating or stayed in their cabins and tried to sleep. Such masterly planning was typical of this cruise, a kind of floating Fawlty Towers unleashed on the high seas.

Later in the day, I chatted with two Canadians, one large, one skinny, who shared a cabin lower in the pecking order than mine. The large one had taken the upper bunk, which collapsed, sandwiching the thin one. The steward finally extracted him, but instead of apologizing, he simply waved his arms about, in a manner worthy of Basil's employee Manuel. "Well, whadda ya expett?" he cryptically asked. Most of the paying victims were wealthy, conservative, and dull. But a spirit of camaraderie and adventure prevailed as things continued to go badly wrong on the ship of fools.

To make up for lost time, our scheduled stops in the Caribbean islands of St. Vincent and Bequia were cancelled. No apology and no compensation was given to the passengers—not even a complimentary bottle of wine to soothe our feelings. The waiters, mostly flatfooted Greeks of a certain age, grumpy after a lifetime of toiling in the tavernas of Piraeus, tried to ignore the passengers. They knew little English, in any case, and could not understand Southern American accents. They often brought the wrong order to puzzled but helpless diners or (an old Greek custom) took a tithe by leaving part of it out. When I asked the wine waiter to describe one of the bottles, which on the menu had no year or vintage but a high price, he simply said: "Very nice. Very new." When I frowned at this, he suddenly shifted his tack to "Very good. Very old." Ironically, we discovered the Greek food—studiously avoided by most of the passengers, who clung to the tough steaks and rubber chicken—was excellent. We ordered it whenever we could.

Before we had met, the astronomer had arranged for my family to sit with his at one table. This was a well-intentioned move. As a fellow academic and father of daughters, he assumed we would be compatible. And so we were—but not for three meals a day. After the first week, I was ready to jump overboard. His wife was of the thin, worrying variety, and he professed not to drink wine—until my bottle was placed upon the table. He lost

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no time in confiding that he used his college salary to pay his taxes on the ample royalties of his textbook. But when his wife asked him to order a bottle, he always refused. Each night he faithfully set up his telescopes on deck, but it was often too cloudy to see very much. Eventually we were rewarded with a white blur which, he assured us, was Halley's Comet.

It took several days for the passengers to recover from this fraught beginning and start to enjoy themselves. We stopped in Grenada, which had been invaded by our heroic troops. No signs of this campaign remained. In Tobago—which our cruise pamphlet called "the idyllic island of Robinson Crusoe," though that fictional character had no connection with the place—we picnicked on the beach.

The daily routine makes a cruise a somewhat regressive experience, a bit like being at a giant house party or a protracted family reunion, where rituals are observed. At first, it is fun to dress for dinner, to go to the captain's cocktail party. You have a program of events, with everything laid out for you, including what degree of dressed-upness is required each night. There's a hairdresser and a manicurist, a sports director and a masseuse, a steam bath and a barber, a sickbay, a doctor, and a reading room. The ship is a shell in which you are encased and encapsulated, and all these strangers become as familiar to you as your neighbors at home. In fact, they become a good deal more familiar, since you see them in all varieties of dress and undress, and there is nothing to do but talk to them or observe them eating, drinking, and speaking to other people. Ships encourage intimacy. People tell each other confidences—and perhaps lies—much as they might in railway compartments. This is perhaps one of cruising's charms.

In our somewhat impersonal world, where most people travel the fastest way between two points, hoping for as little contact with others as possible, cruising is a real anomaly. You take a completely circular journey, hope to lose all sense of time, and don't mind in the least meeting as many congenial people as possible. But there's the rub. The person you enjoyed talking to once may be a bore by day three, and your routes of escape are limited.

I found it difficult to read or write on deck or in the lounge. I kept looking up, as the people swirled around, so I would not miss a chat, a deal, or an assignation. We took home plenty of unread books and a couple of blank journals. After dinner, instead of attending the nightclub, dance hall, and gambling casino, I'd stroll on deck, eager to be on my own for a bit, and then retire to my room to read. One evening, I met a middle-aged but newly married couple who pointed to the sky and said: "That's our star!" When I asked about that romantic idea, they proudly showed me a deed that proved they had actually bought a piece of the solar system.

In some ways, a cruise resembles an academic conference: a place to observe flirtations, pairings, quarrels, and hurt feelings. We soon got to know the prettiest young woman on board, eager for adventure and adept at eluding her mother. When we docked outside Port-of-Spain in Trinidad on Christmas Eve, she went off on the tender to explore the bars with the handsome Greek cabaret singer, he of the shirt open to the waist, gold medallion, and hairy chest. Hours later, as the ship was steaming off to sea again, I met her mother scouring the halls. "Where on earth can that child possibly be?" she wondered. I had to restrain myself from saying, "She's making it with Giorgos in room 43."

The cruise line was caught off guard on Christmas Eve. A group of the religiously inclined were outraged that no arrangements had been made for a service. An officer was dispatched on a motor launch to fetch a priest and returned with some haggard Graham Greene-ish character. Many passengers were half-asleep in their bunks when the dreaded intercom summoned us to Midnight Mass. After Trinidad, the ship set off for some serious ocean cruising down the coast of Venezuela. The real adventure lay ahead in Brazil, where we would find, the cruise pamphlet assured us, "alligators, turtles, monstrous manatees, jaguars and coiled anacondas crouched deep in the jungle."

Next day, as the wind came up, my daughter's ping-pong balls sailed unerringly overboard, and the ship's supply ran out. Unlimited chocolate eclairs and a rough sea proved her undoing. Christmas Day dinner became The Diminishing Party, as everyone at my table gradually decided to celebrate queasily in their bunks. I sat alone, surrounded by lobsters, turkey, and desserts, and saluted the survivors at other tables, waving my paper hat and squeaker across the near-empty dining room.

For the next two days, the program read "At Sea." Here the time warp came into play. In a setting where Fred Astaire would have felt at home, the passengers sat at tables around a dance floor, smoked cigarettes, drank cocktails, danced with their wives, watched the wavering chorus line, laughed at the feeble cabaret jokes, and made believe they were handsome devils in some romantic movie. Our host, the charmless cruise director, a bad-tempered Italian who thought he could sing, each night croaked out his theme song, "*Mala Femmina*." In the daytime, he was responsible for the often haywire arrangements; at night, he scowled at the audience and screamed at the children who disturbed this curious adult ritual. The entertainers themselves were tired and jaded, at the nadir of their profession. The young classical performers, in contrast, were lively, fresh, and enthusiastic. As the ship lurched creakily from side to side, threatening to fling her and her partner into the grand piano, the soprano gamely took off her high-heeled shoes, planted herself firmly on the floor, and continued to sing.

Soon it was time for the lecturers to do their duty—after all, we were part of the entertainment—though none of us were introduced, in person or in the daily news sheet. The man who had hired me had ordered 30 copies of my Hemingway book. But since the book-signing party was scheduled *before* my first talk, no one knew who I was or came to the party. I sat rather forlorn amid piles of my neglected masterpiece.

I couldn't take this personally, and the arrangements for my first lecture were as haphazard as everything else on board—the service, the interminable waits for the tenders that took us to and from the ship, almost anything that involved organization. My audience had been mistakenly directed to the darkened movie theater, where *Papillon* still had 45 minutes to run. We shepherded them to the cabaret lounge, where I stood at the podium, framed by *les girls*, who were rehearsing their show. They gradually tap-danced their way across to the exit, all feathers and bottoms.

I gave three talks about books and people loosely connected to the places we would visit: the South American travel books of Evelyn Waugh, Christopher Isherwood, and Paul Theroux; the Brazilian poetry of Elizabeth Bishop; and Roger Casement and the Rubber Boom in

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Manaus. The cruise director insisted on showing *Papillon* night after night, though he had a copy of Werner Herzog's marvelous movie *Fitzcarraldo*, shot in Manaus and set in the era of my talk. Despite my request, no works by my authors were available in the bookshop on board, and of course no reading list had been sent to the passengers. But many of them proved loyal patrons. Before my first lecture, a charming and sophisticated Mexican child approached me, gravely shook my hand, and said: "I wish you a very plee-sante *conferencia*."

So I lectured, as the ship rocked gently on the Atlantic Ocean between Trinidad and the Amazon, just after my audience had put away a substantial lunch, a few drinks, and a daily dose of Dramamine. The golden oldies, as if under a spell, fell asleep as soon as I began to speak and did not wake up until the real crowd surged in at the end of the hour for the high-stakes bingo game. But they all clapped appreciatively, and one comatose fan told me: "I did so enjoy your talk. You must tell me sometime what it was all about."

Halfway down to the Amazon, off Cayenne on the coast of French Guiana, we stopped at Devil's Island, which for more than a century had been a notorious penal colony. In the 1890's, Captain Alfred Dreyfus had been unjustly imprisoned there. We climbed up the steep hill in the intense equatorial heat and saw, in the cracked walls and rusting cells, the remnants of its bloody past. Some French residents had come over from the capital for the weekend, and the women lay topless on the rocks. The teenage boys from our ship stared in disbelief.

In order to save docking fees, the ship moored outside the harbors. The transfer of 470 mostly elderly people onto small tenders in swelling seas was unbearably tedious. We once waited for more than an hour, on ship and on shore, to spend only 45 minutes in the dreary, squalid town of Santarem. It was difficult to see birds and monkeys on the distant banks of the wide muddy river, let alone the jaguars that crouched in the jungle. The cruise did not provide any maps or detailed information about the Brazilian ports, perhaps because there was nothing much to do there. Most passengers resented the high prices the cruise charged for tours, which could be bought locally for half the cost.

Belem, on the coast of Brazil, lies near an island in the mouth of the Amazon, the Ilha de Marajo, which is larger than Switzerland. We ignored the tour, left our daughter on board to play with her friends, and took a five-hour walk across the steamy town. We saw the market, cathedral, museum, and closely confined animals in the rundown zoo, and ended up on a boat ride through the creeks and channels of the Guama River. It was not thrilling, but at least we could form some private impressions of the place instead of being herded onto buses with the usual crowd.

From Belem, we began the voyage up the Amazon. The pool on board was emptied, since we no longer had sea water to fill it, but people still sat around it in deck chairs. Every day at four, a brief, drenching rainstorm drove everyone indoors. The riverine journey became rather alarming when the ship had to negotiate, with the aid of a pilot from Belem, a narrow channel in the river. We had already noticed that the handsome captain's orders were not always greeted by a smart "aye-aye, sir." This time the crew and officers engaged in an unseemly shouting match, a Greek chorus we could have done without. It was nasty listening to the engines madly braking at the bend of the river, wondering when we would go aground.

We approached a village in the jungle, where scraggly dogs and black pigs rooted in the mud and dugout canoes bobbed next to a rickety pier. The villagers, carrying pots on their heads, their full-bellied children clinging to their legs, strolled out to greet us. They waved, and the passengers on deck put down their Bloody Marys to record the scene on their video cameras. But the ship, which must have seemed from the shore as tall as a skyscraper, created a huge tidal wave as it lurched ever closer. The jetty was swamped, the natives dropped their pots and swam for their lives, the dogs and pigs drowned. I closed my eyes. This was tourism—sitting on the upper deck 50 feet in the air, drink in hand, looking down on ant-like peasants doing their laundry and preparing their meals. I couldn't help feeling ashamed of being part of something rich, fat, and intrusive. We managed to destroy the place before we could invade it.

Soon the hot river, its color a greenish mud, was so wide we could hardly see the shore on either side. After days of ocean cruising, the effect of this calm, flat scenery was oddly disturbing. But the reality of actually being on the Amazon was not enough for the passengers; they wanted photographs and souvenirs to confirm the experience. At Alter do Chao, a torpid village with thatched houses resting precariously on high stilts, they rushed off to buy things. A short time later, they returned laden, like primitive tribesmen, with rough-hewn canoe paddles, bows and arrows, spears, and feathered headdresses. At Boca do Valerio, where stupefied Indians with stained red hair stared at us from the banks of the sluggish river, we walked through a jungle trail and finally saw some wildlife: a bright swarm of butterflies.

In Manaus, our final port, we got up early and left the ship to tour the essential places before catching a plane home. We saw the Indian Museum and the Teatro Amazonas, built in 1896 by the rubber barons at a cost of two million dollars. Caruso sang there, in the days when people were so rich they drank champagne and ate cheese imported from France. Today, alas, Manaus is a dull town. The schedule gave us no time to find a boat and see where the Rio Negro and the Amazon, flowing in two different colors, join each other in one mighty stream. We realized that we would have had to travel another thousand miles upriver, to Leticia, in Colombia, and on to Iquitos in the Peruvian Amazon, if we wanted to see the truly primitive and exotic life we had hoped to find at the end of our journey.

In the afternoon, hot and sweaty, exhausted and desperate for a shower, we were herded, like refugees, into a few small rooms in a depressingly third-rate hotel. We ended the trip in a style typical of this cruise line, traveling to the airport in an old bus, with sealed windows and no air conditioning, that felt like an oven. The furious passengers, finally discharged from protective custody, actually cheered when the plane took off. Touring was tiring—they were looking forward to going back to work. As I stared out of the plane window and saw the spectacular view of a hundred winding tributaries, I reflected on how little of that endless river we had actually seen.

A cruise—an uneasy cross between a high-class prison and an impoverished convalescent home—offers a secure base and organized tours for timid travelers in foreign parts. The whole point of it, I finally realized, was not to travel and see places, but to stay on board to be fed and entertained. I disliked the groupiness, the claustrophobic confinement, and the

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rigid schedules. I missed my solitude and liberty to come and go as I pleased. I learned how dangerous it was to surrender your freedom to a cruise operator who was indifferent to your needs. There was a vast difference between my imaginative idea of a journey to the Amazon and the dull, sometimes agonizing reality of this voyage. Americans being guided by Greeks through Brazil was not a successful formula.

Jeffrey Meyers, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, has recently published biographies of Edmund Wilson, Robert Frost, and Humphrey Bogart. He has just completed a life of George Orwell for Norton.

Letter From Venice

by Andrei Navrozov

The Road to *Il Wellness*

◆

The other day I remembered how the Lebanese, by far the most quaintly European of all the social sets in London, used to play an after-dinner parlor game in which the guests won points by boasting of their innocence. For example, if a guest said, "I've never been on a private plane," or "I've never tasted Yquem," and everybody else in the room has, he won a point. He lost the point if just one other person present could make the same declaration, whereupon it would be somebody else's turn to try to brag in reverse. The skill of the game is to appraise one's competition, since in an audience of Sardinian peasants one is unlikely to win a point by claiming never to have been aboard a Meridiana turboprop creaking toward Rome, to say nothing of a private jet winging its way to the Bahamas. "I've never eaten sheep cheese with live maggots" or "I've never seen 'Beautiful' on television" would be much likelier bets in that case. The beauty of the game is its aristocratic, poker-faced egalitarianism: "I've never been on a commercial flight" can net the clever participant a point among princes as well as among paupers.

But the other big reason I liked to play it was because I always won, what with not having gone to school, not having done drugs, not having been to the Bahamas, not having cheated on my wife, not having seen a basketball game, and so on. Still, there were some dinner parties with very stiff competition—young educated people with houses in the south of France who had never visited Naples, intelligent urbane men who had never tasted pork, beautiful unmarried women who were virgins—and it was at those that I would reach for the ace up my sleeve. "I've never been to the gym," I would say, staring blankly into the middle distance just above my hostess's head, and in all my years in London this never lost me a point. Now I can no longer say it. I've joined a gym. Yes, here in Venice.

When I rang up a friend in London to share this news, he had me describe in precise detail everything I had seen inside the building. I only realized that he had thought I was lying when he asked me point-blank if the purpose of my preposterous confession was to conjure up some sort of atmosphere of moral renewal as an ingenious prelude to borrowing money from him. I suppose he was half expecting that, when pressed, I would mix genres and tell him that inside the gym I had joined were exercise tables covered with green baize, special machines that spun ivory balls, and fitness instructors with voices like angels and words of encouragement like "twenty-six thirty-two, neighbors by two hundred, gentleman in the back." It was only when I used such place-specific terms as "stairmaster" and "treadmill," adding that I had drunk no more than two bottles of ordinary table wine during the last three days and was actually thinking of quitting smoking, that he let go of his skepticism and began to wonder in earnest if the gentleman in the back had gone crazy. Well, the truth of the matter is that I have, and Venice is to blame.

Of course, Venice has a big reputation when it comes to decadence. The reason for this is that most punters who have been chewed up and spat out by this town during the last couple of centuries believed themselves to be in a state of grace when they first arrived, with the consequence that the ambiguities of Venice sooner or later made mincemeat out of their vain delusion. Consequently, if you believe yourself to be a rake or a rogue to the marrow of your bones the moment you first feel the tender undulation of a gondola beneath your feet after a lifetime of what you never thought was particularly steady ground, then the salutary effect of Venice can only be compared to the wheatgrass juice prescribed at the Optimum Health Institute of San Diego to patients whose maladies do not yield to conventional medicine, except that this treatment really works. In other words, Venice does not corrupt. It mere-

THE LU/ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

Although Lagado University in Kafka, South Dakota cannot claim the fame of a Yale, Stanford or Berkeley; its English Department does claim to stay abreast of every slash, gash and laceration of the Postmodernist cutting edge. Our motto says it all: "If it's bleeding in New Haven, then it's hemorrhaging in Kafka, South Dakota." Subscribers to the departmental newsletter will find it an unfailingly reliable entrée to the outré. Our faculty stand ever-alert to decant whole hogsheads of inchoate verblobbage over such pustules of coherent thought as may erupt anywhere in the American academy. Subscribe now for your libretto to the Kanondämmerung.

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ly transmutes virtue into vice, and *vice versa*.

The secret of its success lies in its shameless, chaste ambivalence, of the kind that would permit the most disinterested of observers to use the word "chaste" as a synonym for "shameless" in the description, for instance, of a young girl trying on her first string of pearls with only a cheval glass for company. The very topography, and the toponymy, of this strange town ought to provide the unprejudiced visitor with plenty of examples on his first day here. If one wishes to go from a certain place to another, one can always get there by water; or one always can get there by land, keeping in mind that some of the canals one takes were once land, while some of the streets were once water. The back of the palazzo where I live faces a street called Salizada della Chiesa o del Teatro. This means that the street used to be a canal and that some people thought it led to the church while others thought it led to the theater.

Just across a canal from where I am runs Calle Corner Piscopia o Loredan, which some people thought had just one notable family in residence, while others obviously disagreed. There are seven streets here, admittedly in different parts of town, all called Calle della Chiesa. In fact, there are four different streets in Venice called Calle del Angelo, three Calle Bembo, seven Calle del Cristo, three Calle del Dose, and so on across the map and down the alphabet until one gets to the two Calle Zorzi, one in San Marco and the other in Castello. Typically, each of the thousand bridges spanning the tiny canals will have displayed on its side the heraldic markings of the three families who jointly built it, a deliberate precaution ensuring that none of the bridges would have exclusive proprietary associations; in this, as in everything they do, Venetians have shown that they abhor the notion of the pontifex, who might give to a place its proper name and to all life a single definition.

More than a hint of polytheistic paganism is in the air at the conjunction of treeless, salty earth and Siberian emerald-colored water, of Turkish fatalism and indigenous languor, of Gallic sophistication and northern brawn. This troubles my friend and landlord, a Venetian to his fingertips of whom more will be said in later correspondence, Baron F—. At Easter, I brought him along to hear the midnight mass at the Greek church here, this being his first time ever in an Orthodox cathedral, and he later confessed that he was unable to sleep the rest of the night. Only in the atmosphere of total ambivalence that is Venice, it seems, can a man in his 50's, with an important social position, a young wife, and small children, worry about religion the way people elsewhere—in parts of the world more professedly moral or wholeheartedly Christian—worry about their business affairs, falling interest rates, and the price of the U.S. dollar.

"But tell me," he kept repeating, "is Mussorgsky's music really Christian? We know that Wagner, who is the West's Mussorgsky, was a paganist. Are the Russians and the Greeks really different? Can you, unlike ourselves in the rest of the Christian world, combine pleasure with goodness, wisdom with contradiction, polyphony with morality?" I answered him in the usual way people do when embarrassingly emotional questions are put to them, obfuscating rather than clarifying the points at issue, but within a few days I was out there on the Zattere embankment, filling out membership forms at the Palestra Club Delfino. *"La Strada verso il Wellness,"* proclaimed the poster adorned with a line drawing of the ecologically problematic sea animal of the whale order.

Only a week before I would have said nuke 'em. But now the gentleman in the back only looked meekly all around him, as though saying goodbye to his troubled past, and reflected that the annual cost of living this new dolphin life, in this improbable and contradictory town, is far less than the cost of losing just one of his favorite neighbor bets in the time it takes to light a cigarette or mutter a swearword.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Slovakia

by Gabriela Kolvekova

Hey, Macarena!

◆

(Editor's note: The world, we are told, is shrinking, and all of us are coming to share the same global superculture. However, this brief report from a Slovakian college girl shows what happens to a commercial dance craze when it is taken up by an ancient community living on the fringe of Europe and transformed into a ritual of communal solidarity.)

To most Americans, even to readers of *Chronicles*, the eastern fringe of Slovakia, where I come from, must seem like the other end of the world, but the truth is—and I am not a tourist agent—Slovakia is one of the most beautiful places in Europe. If you are searching for a land of mountains and deserts, swamps and rocky caves, wild rivers, dramatic waterfalls, and untouched woods—everything but a seacoast, which would ruin the solitude—you will find all of them in Slovakia.

The capitol and largest city of Slovakia is Bratislava, 60 kilometers down the Danube from Vienna. Bratislava is a wonderful, cosmopolitan city—as German as it is Magyar and Slovakian—and it is visited every day by tourists taking the obligatory Danube cruise. For a more truly Slovakian experience, however, you must visit the second-largest city, Kosice, which has only 300,000 inhabitants. In Bratislava, you are not far (either in distance or in atmosphere) from the city of Strauss, but Kosice is home to the world's record Macarena dance.

How the SuperMacarena came to Kosice is a long story that stretches back to the beginning of European history. Located in a river valley not far from the Ukrainian border, Kosice was first settled in the Stone Age, long before the arrival of the Slavs. The oldest preserved document referring to the city, the Donation Paper of King Stephen V (of Hungary), dates from 1230. Kosice became a free town in the 14th century, and it was granted a coat of arms in 1369 by King Louis the Great. This consisted of a shield with four silver and white horizontal stripes on a red background. In the upper part were three lilies—the royal emblem of Anjou. This was the first coat of arms, not just in Slovakia but in all of Europe, to be established by royal decree. Today, the city's coat of arms also includes an angel, added by a later royal decree.

In May 1997, we commemorated the 628th anniversary of our attaining the privileges of a royal free city by celebrating the third annual Kosice Days. The festivity lasts nine days, and the celebration provides a series of amusements for

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residents and visitors alike, including the annual opening of the children's railway in Cermel Valley. Children are taken by a train, powered by a 133-year-old steam engine, on a three-mile trip to Alpinka, a favorite local resort. There is also the eating of a special seed cake, which, in 1997, was 628 meters long (to commemorate the anniversary); the election of the queen of Kosice Castle; and a naval battle between the people of Kosice and a band of pirates—despite the lack of a naval tradition (or a seacoast), the home team always manages to win.

The history of Kosice is closely tied to the development of crafts and trade, and no celebration in our town would be complete without a craft fair. Walking through the stalls, you first meet a man who mints coins commemorating the event, each year with a different design. Beside him is a dressmaker, wearing a traditional Slovak costume. After chatting with her, you come upon a man in traditional garb, including a broad belt and a large hat. With the sound of his whistling in your ears, you visit a stall displaying handmade dippers (*crpak*). One of them is so huge that a man would have to carry it with both hands. The carver, Frantisek Estocin, is entering his dippers into the Guinness Book of World Records.

During the third annual festival, Kosice made another bid to enter the Guinness Book: the biggest Macarena dance in human history. The SuperMacarena, which would beat the 48,000-dancer record set in Cincinnati, Ohio, was the brainchild of Peter McFadden, a New Yorker who loves our city, where he has lived for two years. The idea came to him as he was returning from a party at Postova High School, where he teaches.

The countdown began on May 6, when we learned that 40,000 tickets had been distributed; the next day, the number rose to 45,000; and on May 8, the total reached 60,000—10,000 more than the impossibly high total we had hoped for. May 9 began gloomily, but by that evening, it would put Kosice in the record books.

The whole population of our city was set in motion early that day by the anticipation of two special events: sailing on the Hornad River in the afternoon and the SuperMacarena in the evening—a double holiday, as our mayor, Rudolf Schuster, described it.

By late afternoon, the crowds were immense. Some people had decided to watch the day's happenings at home on local television; most, displaying our native good sense, directed their steps either toward the sailing on the Hornad, upon which the weather was smiling, or toward the fountain square on the main street where the SuperMacarena stage was constructed. By evening, it was no easy matter for people to make their way to the city center, as my brother Peter and I discovered.

We slowly worked our way to the square, which was one of three designated dancing spots. As we came in, we saw the big screen which recorded the number of people registered by computer. Everyone who registered was given a special ticket indicating his dancing area. The ticket was supposed to be worn on the clothing, but some dancers cheerfully stuck theirs on their foreheads. The show began at 8:00 P.M., and by then the computer count was 10,563.

Reporters from the regional radio and TV stations, as well as from the first private TV network in Slovakia, set up equipment on balconies and also squeezed through the crowds to ask for reactions to the megashow. The stage held our attention as various dancers and small groups gave performances as well as helpful lessons and lectures about Macarena dancing. The demonstrations and instruction kept us busy as we all watched the screen, waiting for the magic number to appear: 70,000. Every time the number rose even a little bit, people clapped their hands and shouted "Kosice, Kosice, Kosice!" At 9:00 P.M., there were 40,293 dancers; at 9:55, the number was 65,003.

By 10:00 P.M., 67,156 dancers were registered, although the official count put the total at about 66,000. The statistic gave Kosice a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records. But my feelings during the event cannot be explained by a number. I was happy to be a part of such a crowd, and I was dancing as best I could, but there was something more going on, something almost mystical. I was dancing with people who were all taking part in the same civic ritual; nobody paid any attention to the time, the weather, or anything else.

I had the feeling of being part of something whose significance I could not explain rationally. Imagine yourself in the darkness, in the streets with 60,000 other people dancing.

After ten minutes, the song was over, and the dance was an historical moment. When we finished, everyone shouted, cheered, and whistled so loudly that the noise stunned our ears and the spotlights dazzled our eyes. At that moment, we knew we had broken Cincinnati's record.

We continued the celebration until midnight with discotheque dancing. There was also a raffle; the first prize was a car. In a perfect ending to the festivities, a young man who was to take his final driving test in two days won the car. It was an evening that he and the rest of us in Kosice will never forget.

Gabriela Kolvekova writes from Kosice, Slovakia.

Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

Exile, Real and Imagined

◆

Holy Israel, the supernatural community that, in the theology of Judaism, takes shape at Sinai in accepting the Torah and so lives in God's kingdom in the here and now, tells the story of its exile in the setting of that theology. By sin, Adam lost Eden; by rebellion against God's commandments, holy Israel lost the land of Israel, its Eden. These theological convictions intersect with the actualities of the everyday. What this meant in Christian Europe made ample sense: Holy Israel lived its life of exile and awaited its redemption; Christianity understood the biblical sources of that conviction, even though it read the record differently. But when the French Enlightenment forced Christianity out of the center of Western civilization, the secular state found its counterpart in the life of Jewry and in the ethnic group, the Jews.

Then what were the Jews, and the secular nation-states that succeeded the Christian empire, to make of exile? The 19th century gave one answer: The Jews were no longer in exile but accepted the tasks of loyal citizens of the nation-state. That is what the French rabbis told Napoleon in 1812 when he asked, Are you French or Jewish? The question carried its own imperative. The 20th century gave another answer: The Jews are not

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only an ethnic group and are certainly not a religious community; they constitute a people and should form for themselves a nation-state, like other peoples. In that formulation—the Zionist one, beginning with Theodor Herzl in 1897—the Jews were in exile and should go home to the land of Israel, where they were to found (and in 1947 did found) the state of Israel. The idea of exile took on new life, this time in a secular and political framework. It formed part of the rhetoric of Zionism and today forms a native category of Israeli nationalism, which deems Jews living in states other than Israel to be living in exile and to be citizens of the Jewish state.

What, exactly, can anyone mean by "exile" today? Since the U.S. Senate has nearly a dozen Jewish members and the House of Representatives well over a score, how are the Jews supposed to be "in exile"? The miseries of exile, which holy Israel patiently endured in Christian Europe and which the Jews in 19th and 20th-century Europe denied, but within which nearly six million of them died, hardly form part of the day-to-day existence of Jews in the Western democracies. We see the futility of secularizing a theological structure and system when we realize what, in political terms, "exile" actually means.

In his *Calamities of Exile: Three Nonfiction Novellas* (1998), Lawrence Weschler, a truly remarkable writer, tells us what exile means in

> three tales . . . about basically decent expatriates (the first an Iraqi, the second a Czech, the third an Afrikaner), each of whom tries to do the right thing with regard to the totalitarian regime holding sway over his homeland, to varyingly calamitous effect.

The Iraqi is an architect, son of Saddam Hussein's court architect; the Afrikaner is a leading South African poet, artist, and essayist who got himself involved with, and used by, the communist African National Congress; and the Czech is an anticommunist who ran an underground operation from London and ended up, when the communists fell, accused of involvement in their secret service.

What Weschler makes clear is the true costs paid by authentic exiles in this world. And he makes one other point:

> One might note . . . how in all three of the totalitarian situations surveyed in this text . . . the regime's dominance depended, paradoxically, on both the atomization and the homogenization of the subjugated population. Dictators want their subjects both to surrender all sense of themselves into the national (or class) mass and, simultaneously, to experience themselves, qua individuals, as utterly alone, cut off, both endlessly suspect and unendingly suspicious of everyone else. Pithed, in short, of even the fantasy, let alone the possibility, of any sort of independent agency. In a sense the regime intends that its subjects experience themselves as exiles in their own homes—isolated, ineffectual, and utterly contingent. For the condition of actual exile ordinarily dictates a similar sort of double movement in its victims, toward simultaneous atomization and homogenization and this wearing down of the potential for agency. Edges get shaved away and subjectivity is continuously shorn until individuals experience themselves as little more than abject objects, tossed by a cruel and senseless fate.

That is what authentic "exile" means.

In that context, what can the theological construct of "*Golah*" or "exile" in Judaism possibly mean in a secular framework? Jewry in exile never underwent the kind of experience that Weschler captures. Take the Czech exiles, for example. The authentic exiles from communist Czechoslovakia were the native residents of the country, cut off from one another and suspicious of everyone. The regime attempted to subvert and corrupt the entire population, some with threats of punishment, others with promises of small favors. In the Afrikaner poet's case, the communist African National Congress sent an untrained, incompetent, and highly visible artist back into the country on a mission to Stephen Biko, as though the bureau of state security were not following the poet's every movement. The story of Hussein's corruption of Iraq, his creation of "the Republic of Fear" (the title of Kanan Makiya's classic work)—this, too, represents the internal exile of a complex and, before Hussein, highly accomplished nation. As Weschler says, "After the Baathists stormed back into power, in 1968, no sphere of Iraqi life was any longer allowed to exist outside politics."

"Exile" thus stands in the real world for a condition of utter alienation, brought about by state power and institutionalized in enduring form, of persons from one another and from the social order. Exile forms part of the subversion of man, his corruption into something less than the image of God. In the Judaic theological framework, the term bears authentic and heavy meaning. In the secular, political experience of our own time, we are still paying the costs of the corruption and subversion of human autonomy and dignity that communism effected wherever it ruled. How the same theological and political language pertains to the situation of a secular ethnic group is unclear. What I learn from Weschler's masterpiece of moral analysis is the difference between real and imagined exile, the human meaning and costs of the secular exile brought about by the politics of this calamitous century, and by communism most of all.

Jacob Neusner is Distinguished Research Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida and a professor of religion at Bard College.

CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR.

The senior editor for books at *Chronicles* has returned to Wyoming.

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POLITICS

Bush's Red Tory

by Greg Kaza

Only Americans would take seriously the idea that a foreign politician who presided over the demise of a once-dominant political party should serve as the model for a major U.S. presidential candidate. If a German proposed that the ruling Social Democratic Party should follow former Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, or an Italian suggested that the ruling Socialists should take advice from old French Communist Party boss Georges Marchais, he would be laughed out of his country. Gorbachev presided over the demise of a world superpower; under Marchais, the French Reds, who once had the power to bring down governments, have seen much of their working-class base defect to Jean Marie Le Pen, he of *la droit terrible*. No serious observer in Berlin or Rome, or in Moscow or Paris where these two men are known best, would suggest digging up their political carcasses. This makes Martin Brian Mulroney's exhumation in Washington and the heart of Texas all the more curious, since Mulroney presided over the near-total destruction of the center-left Progressive Conservative Party, which ruled Canada as recently as 1993.

Canada is the United States' largest trading partner and shares with it the longest unprotected border in the world; yet even in major border towns like Detroit, there is very little interest in the politics of our neighbor to the north, save for an occasional reference to the U.S. State Department's *bête noire*, francophone separatists who refuse to abandon the late René Lévesque's vision of independence. For too many Americans, Canada is a land of polar bears and lumberjacks whose most famous exports are Hollywood comedians, game-show hosts, and network news anchors.

Despite the last export, the nation's politics are given short shrift by the American media. It is dangerous to make these observations in politically correct media circles where Canada's alleged inferiority complex *vis á vis* the United States is accepted, even welcomed. It is easier when your mother is Canadian and your relatives stretch from Windsor to Montreal.

Few Americans remember Mulroney, who will go down in history as the man largely responsible for the utter annihilation of one of Canada's great political parties of the 20th century: the Progressive Conservatives, aptly called "PCs" by right-wing critics. After winning the leadership of the party in 1983, Mulroney was elected to a seat in Parliament. In the national elections of September 1984, his party won one of the largest parliamentary majorities in Canadian history. But over the next eight years, Mulroney eagerly abandoned his conservative base, earning the sobriquet "Red Tory." Increasingly unpopular because of his repeated sellouts, Mulroney announced his resignation early in 1993. In the ensuing federal election, the Progressive Conservatives were left with a mere two seats in Ottawa. The party has never recovered from the Mulroney debacle: It is now one of the smallest Canadian parties, trailing the ruling Liberals, the conservative-libertarian Reform, and the francophone separatist Bloc Québécois. The PCs suffered another setback last year when their leader, Jean Charest, a Red Tory in the Mulroney tradition, defected to the Quebec Liberals, only to be soundly thrashed in the ensuing provincial election by Parti Québécois leader Lucien Bouchard, who may well lead Quebec to independence.

At first glance, Mulroney appears a strange model for George W. Bush, the son of former U.S. President George Herbert Walker Bush and a leading contender for the 2000 Republican presidential nomination. Mulroney abandoned his conservative base through a series of compromises with the Liberal opposition (for instance, his cheerleading for the North American Free Trade Agreement); he angered Canada's English majority by creating the impression that he was pandering to francophone Quebec (most prominently with the Meech Lake Accord, whose failure dealt his premiership a serious blow). Upon closer inspection, however, the Mulroney-Bush alliance makes perfect sense.

As prime minister, Mulroney's unapologetic pro-Americanism earned him criticism from both the Canadian left and right. The left saw him as a flunky of U.S. corporate interests; the right questioned his price for sovereignty in acquiescing to Quebec. But what really peeved Canadians, Lansing Lamont writes in his book *Breakup: The Coming End of Canada and the Stakes for America*, was Mulroney's

> self-applauding air. . . . He was marked as a name-dropping blarneyist with a craving for approval, a man of shallow intellectual depth with a vindictive streak when it came to dealing with associates who were not up to snuff. . . . Rightly or wrongly, Canadians may have sensed in Mulroney a man whose first-rate ambitions and achievements could never quite overcome the second rate in his character and personality. Instinctively, some may have suspected that in American politics Mulroney would have become at best a colorful Senate committee chairman, behind the scenes an artful log-roller and after-hours raconteur. Like his friend George Bush, he epitomized the triumph of perseverance over talent.

Mulroney became almost a fixture at the White House, where he provided a contrast to his predecessor, the debonair Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who was snobbish toward Americans in general and especially toward a succession of Presidents he considered his intellectual inferiors. Ronald Reagan barely tolerated Trudeau, and the gap in U.S.-Canadian relations widened during his administration. In fact, both were nationalists: Trudeau, determined to steer Canada along its own path, independent of the United States on the world stage; Reagan, just as insistent that America "stand tall" again in the world. But as soon as Trudeau and the Liberals were replaced with Mulroney, relations improved dramatically. During Bush's presidency, Mulroney and his family became regular guests at the President's summer residence in Kennebunkport, Maine. Lamont writes:

> The two leaders conversed frequently on the phone, and Mul-

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> roney boasted he could reach the President anytime he wanted, where Trudeau would have been lucky to get past the White House operator. . . . Canada under Mulroney generally supported the United States on foreign policy issues despite differences in approach.

The relationship was so chummy that Bush, who coined the term "New World Order," suggested Mulroney run for U.N. Secretary General when the position became vacant in late 1991.

Like President Bush, Mulroney saw troubling signs of nationalism in the Quebec separatist movement. To a globalist, Québécois independence is a step *away* from the much-acclaimed New World Order and its homogenized culture. In 1987, Mulroney attempted to solve the Quebec problem by negotiating an agreement among the provincial premiers at Quebec's Meech Lake. The accord, which recognized Quebec's status as "a distinct society," required the approval of all ten Canadian provincial legislatures by 1990. Despite criticism that Quebec received too much under Meech Lake, the deal was soon ratified by seven provinces. Power shifted, however, in three provinces, and their premiers had second thoughts. In the interim, Quebec's provincial government overrode a Canadian supreme court decision that a ban on English-language outdoor signs was unconstitutional. Anglophone Canada was outraged, and hard-line Quebec separatists exploited the resulting fallout.

In the end, Meech Lake was defeated by a filibustering member of the Manitoba provincial legislature and the opposition of Newfoundland's premier. Mulroney paid a steep political price for his failure to speak out for a united Canada until late in the ratification process. And separatists in Quebec, apparently no longer welcome in Canada, eventually benefited from the fallout. In 1980, a referendum on sovereignty lost in Quebec by a margin of 60 to 40 percent; following Meech Lake's demise, support for sovereignty steadily gained ground in the province. By 1995, only slightly more than 50 percent of voters cast their ballots against a similar referendum. The defeat of the Meech Lake Accord may yet contribute to Canada's breakup into two, or even three, separate countries.

Yet the latest word in some Washington circles is that the Republicans can learn from Mulroney, and George W. Bush seems a willing student. Earlier this year, Mulroney made a pilgrimage to Austin, and while Governor Bush, according to the *Dallas Morning News*, "declined to say whether the former prime minister had urged him to seek the presidency," he did pass on this advice from Mulroney: "He believes that it's important for the Republican Party to unify. He's worried that the party would tend to shatter on certain issues as opposed to unify on issues."

Mulroney's tenure as prime minister, some Republican insiders claim, proves the wisdom of a compassionate, pragmatic leader who, most importantly, understands the endless possibilities afforded by the abandonment of a party's conservative base. Foremost among these is an insincere respectability in certain media circles. Another benefit of Red Toryism, it is said, is political respectability and acceptance among moderate voting blocs. Those who make this argument in Washington and deep in the heart of Texas forget history: Kim Campbell, Mulroney's successor as Progressive Conservative leader, presided over the party's 1993 drubbing, which resulted in the ascension of the Reform Party. Reform's leader, Preston Manning, has no intention of abandoning his conservative base.

Brian Mulroney's rehabilitation is further proof of a saying beloved by my Canadian relatives: Only in America.

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SOCIETY

Transgressing the Pieties

by David Mills

As every alert American has noticed, feminist leaders have jumped to the defense of President Clinton ever since he was first accused of sexually abusing a young woman who thought she was invited to see the then-governor for a talk, perhaps about a job. In doing so, they have made a remarkable reversal of the standards for sexual propriety which they had furiously demanded for the last three decades.

Once their cry had been "Believe the woman," no matter what the evidence. Once they had declared, and worked to have written into law, that any sexual relation between a superior and an inferior was by definition abusive because the victim could not safely decline. The imbalance of power, so they plausibly argued, made consensual sex impossible—and they did not spare even the pro-abortion Sen. Robert Packwood for pressing himself, and not just his intentions, upon women in his office. (His being a Republican, and therefore on many issues a political enemy, presumably lost him their support.)

But those were the days of "consciousness-raising," a phrase with the pleasing implication that those who did not agree with them had low, probably subterranean, consciousnesses. These "are the new days of consciousness-lowering," as Noemie Emery wrote in the *Weekly Standard*, when feminist leaders tell women

> to unlearn everything they knew. They are being told now that the accused male merits the presumption of innocence; that without absolute proof, the man's word is valid; that if it's an old story, it no longer has meaning; and that a rape charge shouldn't be allowed to interfere with the career of a prominent man.

Even before the latest revelation, the spokeswomen of American feminism had, to a woman, sided with the President and against the women who accused him—women whose testimony they would have accepted without question had it been directed at one of their enemies, as they accepted without question Anita Hill's story of sexual harassment by Clarence Thomas.

Interviewed in the *New York Observer*, a group of prominent feminist writers cheered on the President's affair with Miss Lewinsky, one famously announcing that she would herself enliven President Clinton's day as a reward for his having kept abortion legal. Others made similar offers and expressed some envy for the young intern's closeness to power.

The group included Erica Jong, who, with her novel *Fear of Flying*, proved that you could make a best-seller out of a few banal ideas as long as you were the first

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woman to put so much sex in a book and your banal ideas were the sort—"sex is fun and liberating too"—that the public seemed to want to have articulated in a (supposedly) serious book. She thought the President's intimate hours with an intern, gross imbalance of power though it was, were just *wonderful*.

Conservatives have jumped on this point, but in the wider world of the dominant media, which is usually so eager to expose hypocrisy, not a word was said of it. A writer in the *New York Observer* came close in a story titled "N.Y. Feminists Stand by Their Bill," but after admitting that the feminist leaders' critics had a "valid point"—a phrase journalists use before dismissing an argument as trivial or irrelevant—he declared that the point "is by now so obvious and so worn with repetition as to waste the words of those who make it."

The religious world has its own examples of this remarkable reversal of principle. At last summer's Lambeth Conference of the world's Anglican bishops, the sexual liberationism of the Western liberals was trounced by the determined opposition of African and Asian bishops—some of whom have received a goodly amount of money from those Western liberals, and will presumably do so no longer.

Barbara Harris, the suffragan bishop of Massachusetts, who is herself black and a great advocate of sexual "diversity," announced that the African bishops had been bought off with "chicken dinners." (She really did.) Harris had made her pre-episcopal career on righteous indignation, and had anyone else used such a racial, if not racist, stereotype, she would have howled with outrage—and howled and howled and howled—and howled and howled and howled.

Other liberal bishops have offended even more grossly against the hitherto required deference to racial sensitivity and multiculturalism. The bishop of Arizona, who is white, declared that the African bishops "want to condemn homosexuality quite soundly while turning a blind eye to the instances of polygamy, tribalism, genocide and even female mutilation in their own culture," and the bishop of Rhode Island announced that the Africans had taken money (meaning bribes) from American bishops. (She apparently assumed that, had they not been bribed, they would have voted with her and the other Western liberals.) Other liberal bishops have spoken in similar ways, without one word of criticism from any other American liberal.

But as with President Clinton, so with the bishops: The revelation that their claims to complete moral enlightenment are bogus will have no effect on their power or on their confidence. They are still in office, still in control, and still, on all other matters, particularly innovations in the sexual order, insisting on building the new kingdom of sexual diversity which, they think, only reactionaries and homophobes would resist.

So, as it turns out, the last remaining feminists seem to be moral conservatives, who think the imbalance of power argument true but would have called a man who desired sex of his secretary a creep and a worm long before any feminist thought up the charge.

Conservatives would also say, while the feminist establishment would not, that even two people of equal status should stay out of bed with one another unless they are married. This rule, had the sexual liberals not removed it, would have helped protect the secretary by giving her a transcendent reason to reject her boss's advances. The traditional moral canon is, if you will, a feminist statement.

There is an advantage to having a fixed moral code: Our standards would not change if the sexual predator were our political ally. The man with a fixed moral code cannot look as self-serving, unstable, and unprincipled as feminist leaders look—or, to be precise, have revealed themselves to be. (Such a man may be a hypocrite, certainly, but that only means that he can be called to account in a way the relativist cannot be.)

Our feminist leaders and liberal bishops do have a fixed desire, if not a fixed principle. They insist on the absolute necessity of affirming almost any sexual activity anyone prefers. (Sex with children is, for the moment, still unacceptable, but there are some on the fringes of liberalism who propose even that.) Episcopal bishops may place a few more restrictions than the feminists by requiring that such activity be "life-enhancing" and "mutual" and perhaps even "monogamous" (an ambiguous word, these days, meaning only "for a period of time").

This explains the feminist who would gladly service President Clinton to reward him for his support for abortion, because abortion must be legal in the sexually unfettered world she desires. It explains the American bishops' assault on the African bishops, because the sexually libertine insist not only on having their way, but on having their way approved by others.

Perhaps a psychologist should investigate, because it all looks very much like an addiction. Only an addiction—for both ideology and disordered sexuality enslave the will—can explain why the feminists and the bishops transgress the liberal pieties.

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IMMIGRATION

Poster Illegals . . . and the Rest of Them

by John Vinson

I have seen this woman and her child more times than I can remember. She is the poster mother for illegal immigration. In article after article on illegal aliens in the mainstream press, sympathetic journalists describe her suffering and hardship in a land where people have too little compassion.

Another such poster illegal is the thin, sad-eyed man who tells the reporter that he is only here to provide for his family and do work no American is willing to perform.

I don't deny that sympathetic illegal aliens exist. At an official count of five million (and the real figure is probably higher), it would certainly be surprising if there weren't at least a few illegals with hearts of gold. But after nine years of research and study of immigration, legal and illegal, I can testify that many illegal aliens are not nearly so heartwarming as the poster people.

My education on this subject began in 1990, when people from Southern California began contacting me at the American Immigration Control Foundation. In voices of alarm and despair, they related how their state was being overrun by

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illegal immigrants. They spoke of growing areas of their communities where they were not welcome—indeed, where they feared to go. Often, they complained, authorities would side with illegals against Americans.

I particularly remember the statement of a woman who said that we were facing a new breed of illegal aliens. In the past, most were agricultural workers. Now, she said, many of them were just lowlife types, up to no good.

I wondered why I was not hearing any of this from the national media. Several years would pass, in fact, before the "impact press" would grudgingly take notice of what was happening in California.

One thing still rarely reported is ethnic cleansing. It may seem a harsh term to apply here in America, but it accurately describes the expulsion of Americans from their communities by illegal aliens. The worst examples are in California, but contacts in other states, from Washington to Arkansas, have related similar accounts.

Though the details differ, all the stories roughly go as follows: Several families of illegals move into a house or houses on a block. Our laws on safety and hygiene usually forbid such crowding, but for some reason, when these foreigners are involved, the laws aren't enforced. Maybe officials fear that Latino activists will call them racists.

I spoke with a former code inspector in Orange County, California, who had lost her job for trying to enforce the codes in neighborhoods where illegals had settled. Along with code-breaking, the uninvited aliens get away with driving uninsured cars and many other violations. Summing up the situation, a lady living in Washington State's Yakima Valley observed: "Here, there's one law for Americans and one for Mexicans." The last time I heard from her, she was planning to move to Idaho.

Once the illegals move in, they often make their presence felt with loud music through the night and junk cars in the front yard. A Mexican-American man told me that they may take it as a challenge to fight if you politely ask them to curb their ways. After dealing with them for a long time, he concluded that they come here mainly for money and have little love for America. It's an attitude they pass on to their children, quite a few of whom are U.S. citizens by reason of birth on our soil. "I know it's wrong," he confessed to me, "but sometimes I hate them."

As time goes on, more Americans sell their homes and leave, and more and more families of illegals show up to buy them. Crime increases, and graffiti appears everywhere. The handwriting on the wall says it's time for the remaining natives to sell at a loss and get out.

I had the opportunity to see the consequences of ethnic cleansing, California-style, when I visited Orange County a few years ago. Ben Seeley, a well-known border control activist in the state, took me on a guided auto tour of Santa Ana. He pointed to neighborhood after neighborhood that had been home to working-class and middle-class Americans just a few years before. To one degree or another, they bore the marks of their new owners: Spanish signs, graffiti, and toughs hanging out on street corners—gang members, Ben told me.

A few years back, I got to see border-crossing illegals face to face on a tour conducted by the Border Patrol through the Imperial Beach sector of the border, south of San Diego. As we stood near the metal border wall (about 12 feet high), Mexicans perched on top of it, males in their late teens and early 20's. They yelled insults, clowned around, and tossed pebbles at us. One yelled to me in English that I could take his picture for a dollar.

We moved on. One lone patrolman remained at the wall. About 30 minutes later, word came over the radio to our escort that the Mexicans on the wall had jumped down on the U.S. side and started running. There was nothing the lone patrolman could do about it.

Our escort, a well-built man in his early 30's, said that the illegals were becoming much more aggressive. Not long before, he'd had a struggle with one and was pulled into a ditch full of sewage before subduing him. I respected his efforts, but I felt sad that the government he served was obviously just going through the motions of trying to control the border. (During the past few years, with great publicity, Washington has finally devoted the resources necessary to control the Imperial Beach sector. But this success has simply diverted most of the flow of illegals to the east.

Later that evening, we toured the holding pen where captured illegals were processed. They were in good spirits, more than a few with a cocksure arrogance. They knew they would be released across the border soon and could try again to enter the United States, maybe even that same night. All appeared well fed and reasonably well dressed. Quite often, contrary to the media image, illegals are not desperately poor. The truly impoverished generally lack the means and stamina to undertake a long migration.

After returning from California, I mentioned the illegals' obvious contempt for America to Donald Huddle, an economist who specializes in immigration. "Why shouldn't they have contempt?" he replied. "We've earned it." He went on to explain that illegals, despite their reputation for hard work, are not necessarily honest. "Where they come from," said Huddle, "you can be hard-working and dishonest."

I mentioned Huddle's observation to a retired Border Patrol veteran, and he agreed. Most illegal immigrants, he told me, get involved in at least some kind of petty crime, shoplifting being the most common. A considerable number commit major crimes.

Where is all this leading? Two telephone conversations I had with natives of Mexico may give us some idea. One was with a woman who called after reading some of our foundation's material which demanded effective action against illegal immigration. In flawless English, she identified herself as a Mexican and expressed great anger over our position.

After calling me a racist, she told me that she hated "Europeans" and that her people would take over the Southwest because "We have babies, and you don't." In that case, I told her, she should at least be grateful to our government for the generous subsidies it provides, starting with free pregnancy care and delivery to illegal alien mothers. She didn't appreciate my attempt at humor.

The other caller makes me recall what I said earlier about illegal immigrants with hearts of gold. But his story was not one that the poster propagandists would care to report. He began by telling me that he came to the United States illegally as a child. He, too, had run across some of our material. Unlike the woman, he agreed with it.

After arriving here, this man explained, he was adopted by an American family and brought up to respect America. He said he was sorry for violating our laws and wanted to make up for it. He had obtained amnesty, served in the Armed Forces, and wanted to be a good citizen.

"Here in Los Angeles," he said, "I see

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the illegals, and I talk to them. They are not a good influence. Many of them sell drugs. I've been to other American cities, and I can tell you this: Los Angeles is not an American city anymore."

Expressing regret again for his own illegal entry, he injected a final thought: "We've got to stop this illegal immigration. If not, we won't have a country."

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FILM

Resurrecting the Third Man

by George McCartney

The Third Man

Produced by Alexander Korda and David O. Selznick
Directed by Carol Reed
Screenplay by Graham Greene
Released by London Films
Re-released by Rialto Pictures

Forget the Dark Side. Darth Sidious? No more convincing than Bela Lugosi flitting about an Abbott and Costello travesty. For the real thing, you'll have to visit your local revival house when *The Third Man* shows up. Although filmed in black and white without special effects, its evocation of evil is infinitely more unsettling than anything Industrial Light and Magic has ever served up.

The Third Man turns 50 this year, and to celebrate the occasion, Rialto Pictures has restored and re-released director Carol Reed's brilliant adaptation of Graham Greene's narrative of foreign intrigue. It's being distributed nationwide throughout the summer.

Seeing the film in 35 mm projected on a full-size screen reveals its intentions with far greater clarity than video possibly could. To interpret Greene's vision of a world without sure moral footing, Reed employed a few simple strategies that lose most of their impact on the small screen. He shot many of his scenes on an angle so that tables, chairs, buildings, and actors always seem on the verge of tumbling from the frame. He chose to film the narrative's death dance of innocence and duplicity in high-contrast black and white so that characters are nearly invisible one moment and blindingly luminous the next as they slip in and out of shadows, an effect that would be practically impossible to recreate in today's Technicolor world. Then there is the restored soundtrack. Hearing it, you can appreciate why *The Third Man* theme became a number one seller when it was released as a record in 1949. Anton Karas's sinuous and insinuating zither perfectly complements the film's intrigue.

The story line is standard-issue Greene, which is a very high standard indeed. It's a tale of benighted innocence rescued by a timely dose of withering disillusionment. Holly Martins is the innocent, an American lost in an all-too-experienced post-World War II Europe. He's played with intrepid dimness by Joseph Cotten, whose plodding, phlegmatic manner perfectly suits the role. Martins, a writer of pulp Western novelettes, comes to Vienna to see his old chum, Harry Lime, a boyishly mischievous Orson Welles, whose penchant for scene-stealing is, for once, entirely appropriate. As Lime, Welles is meant to be both a practiced charmer and an unconscionable betrayer.

When Martins arrives in Vienna, an occupied and thoroughly demoralized city policed by the four Allied powers, he discovers that his friend has died in questionable circumstances. When he decides to investigate, he's thwarted at every turn by Major Calloway, head of the British security forces. Trevor Howard plays Calloway as a decent man soured by the corruption he's forced to deal with. He informs Martins that Lime was "the worst racketeer to make a dirty living in this city." Lime's racket was unusually vile. Stealing penicillin from the Allies' military hospitals, he diluted it and then sold it to an unsuspecting Austrian public, knowing full well he was rendering the drug harmful and often lethal, especially when used on children.

Martins doesn't believe Calloway's charge. As a hack writer in the Zane Grey mode, he's convinced he can distinguish the good guys from the bad at a glance, and he's thoroughly convinced Lime is a white hatter. He angrily declares his intention to "get to the bottom of this." Exasperated by such Yankee innocence, the world-weary major retorts, "Death's at the bottom of everything, Martins. Leave death to the professionals."

Calloway tosses off the remark merely to put a fool in his place, but his words prescribe the medicine Martins needs to cure his self-infected, self-important innocence. In Greene's world, moral responsibility begins with the recognition of our common mortality, an awareness that has the power to dissolve the presumed differences to which we obstinately cling. It's difficult to nurture self-aggrandizing fantasies by the graveside.

Reed visualizes this theme with two images: a cemetery path and a Ferris wheel. He begins and ends the film at gravesites. This gives him the opportunity to shoot a leaf-littered, tree-lined cemetery path straight down its center, forcing us to contemplate the convergence of its parallel lines as they recede to their vanishing point. It's the very image of mortality, right down to the autumn leaves which Reed had his crew throw into the scene from ladders placed just outside camera range. The path announces our destiny. We're all walking along it, each step irreversibly shaping our identity. We take our decisions—good, bad, and indifferent—inexorably to the grave.

Against this somber image stands Lime's frivolous emblem, the amusement park Ferris wheel on which he takes Martins for a ride—in more ways than one. Lime, of course, is very much alive, having faked his death by using the corpse of a former accomplice. He is, ironically, the "third man" Martins has been searching for, the man who helped carry the dead body from the accident site and who, Martins had thought, might be able to solve what seemed an impenetrable mystery. Indeed, Lime does just that, only to produce a more profound one: the mystery of evil.

Like Martins, Lime is childish, but his childishness doesn't express itself in naive heroism. Instead, he operates on one principle only: heedless self-interest. The Ferris wheel expresses him perfectly. Unlike the cemetery path, it has no beginning or end. For Lime, life is a circular series of amusements, swirling about him as he stands, a bemused ringmaster, at its center. From this position, he coolly gauges the value of other people by one criterion only: the degree to which they either help or hinder his comfort.

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Although charming, he is a monster who attracts people and then uses them remorselessly to advance his own interests. When the Brits seem to be closing in on him, he has no compunction about selling out his Czechoslovakian mistress to the Russians in order to save himself. As Martins puts it in Greene's text, "evil was like Peter Pan—it carried with it the horrifying and horrible gift of eternal youth," a perspective from which other people are not quite real; they're merely conveniences or obstacles. That's why Lime can make Martins an extraordinary offer on the Ferris wheel. At the ride's apex, they stand in a swinging cabin, the cityscape seesawing crazily in the background. Disgusted by his friend's evident shamelessness, Martins asks him, "Have you ever seen one of your victims?" As an answer, Harry beckons Holly to the cabin window and bids him to look on the people in the amusement park below, now mere specks:

> Victims? Don't be melodramatic. Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving forever? If I offered you 20,000 pounds for every dot that stops, would you really, old man, tell me to keep my money? Or would you calculate how many dots you could afford to spare?

After all, he cheerily rationalizes, he's doing no more than governments do. "They talk about the people and the proletariat. I talk about the suckers and the mugs. It's the same thing. They have their five-year plans and so have I." One could hardly imagine a more chilling parody of Christ's temptation in the desert. Lime makes his argument with such cunning confidence in its irresistibility that he backhandedly indicts our entire century, if not all human history. How many of us have steadfastly rejected his satanic temptation? How often have our leaders chosen to sacrifice the dots on the ground in the cause of some higher political goal—the classless state, say, or national identity—when what they were really after was the cheapest of bribes, the so-called power and glory of this world? How many dots have we sacrificed in Serbia?

Reed stingingly delivers one of Greene's central messages: No one has clean hands, least of all those who hold official authority. It turns out that Harry's penicillin racket was made possible by the Allies' occupation forces. They decided to restrict the antibiotic to their military hospitals, keeping it from the Austrians. Reed widens the indictment with a sort of macabre grace note supplied by the running gag of Holly mistaking Calloway's name time and again: He keeps calling him Callaghan until the exasperated major finally points out, "I'm British, not Irish." Yes, so you are, one thinks. Other than that, you're as fine a chap as the rest of us good souls. It's just that we're all a bit compromised by those nagging entanglements we have with our respective tribalisms and self-interests.

Although leavened by theological hope, Greene's story is, in his narrator's words, "grim and sad and unrelieved." Reed, however, had the visual wit to turn it into popular entertainment. He brightened Greene's grayness without sacrificing any of his provocative darkness. What seems bleak on the page fairly blazes on the screen, nowhere more so than when Welles makes his justly famous entrance as Harry Lime, a name with a distinctively demonic aura. Old Harry is British slang for Satan, and Lime, as Harry's dialogue reminds us, suggests limelight and Lucifer's pre-fallen splendor. After hearing the other characters discuss this scoundrel obsessively for 59 minutes, we become—at least on first viewing—accustomed to thinking of him as an absence whose presence is felt everywhere, almost a Thomistic version of evil. Then Lime suddenly appears, and the screen flares with an energy that we could hardly have anticipated. Old Harry will only be on screen for 11 minutes, but what an 11 minutes!

Lurking in the shadows of a doorway, Lime is revealed to us when a window is opened above, illuminating him. As the camera trucks slowly forward, it reveals Welles for the first time. In extreme close-up, his face seems the radiant, incandescent source of all the world's light as he smiles at us with a conspirator's knowing welcome. You've been looking for me, his expression mockingly says. Well, how do like what you see? With an arch smile on his overfed but still handsomely rakish visage, Welles is physically the incarnation of debonair sleaze. The masterfully contrived scene defines Lime instantly. He is a charming, fallen angel of light emerging from his chosen darkness, as unbowed as he is unrepentant. We instantly understand why others are drawn to him. He may be morally contemptible, but he is also a vital, quicksilver Lucifer, who speaks seductively to the infantile wantonness in us all.

Typical of Greene's vision, Lime becomes both satan and savior to the innocent Martins, at once a source of temptation and an occasion to redeem himself. In Greene's excessively Augustinian universe, no one is saved without first taking the sacrament of sin. Martins does this by awakening to his complicity with the engaging Harry. It's dupes like himself who license such predators.

Thus Lime, who had been the elusive third man at his fake accident, becomes unintentionally quite a different third man, the one who shows up in Chapter 24 of Saint Luke's gospel. In this passage, two disconsolate disciples are walking to Emmaus after Christ's Crucifixion. As they proceed, they suddenly notice there is a third man walking with them. Only when they pause to break bread together are their eyes opened. The third man is Jesus.

This is the film's faith: that despite our ineradicable selfishness, we nevertheless serve as instruments of one another's salvation. Greene, perhaps, but not grim.

George McCartney teaches English at St. John's University.

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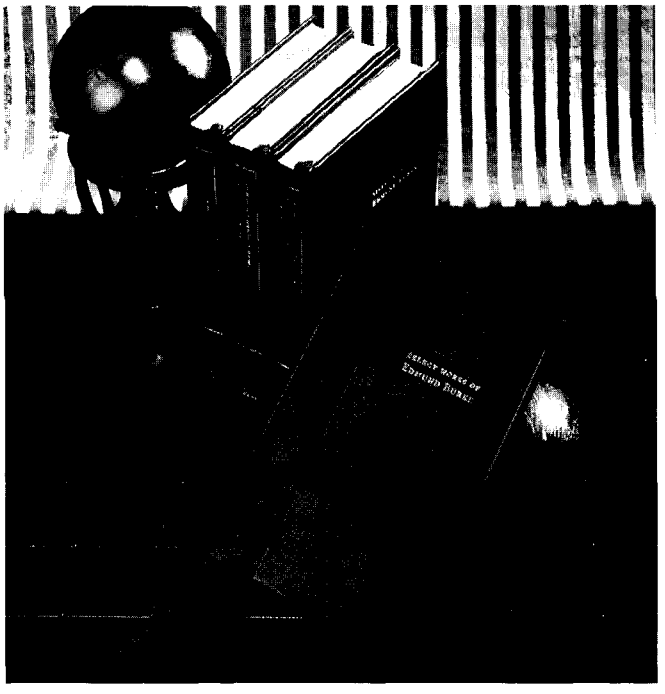

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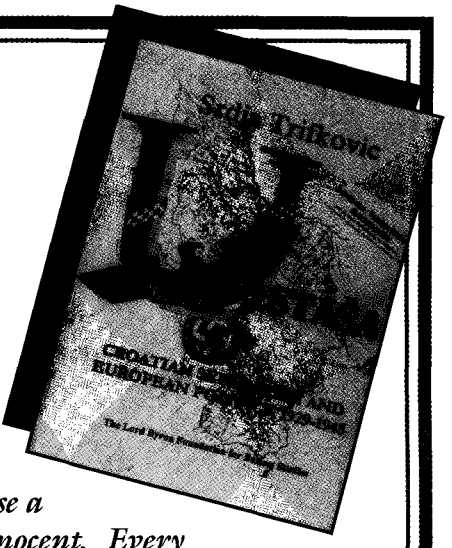

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By Srdja Trifkovic

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323 pp.; $19.00; ISBN 1-892478-01-3)

Nations cannot be invented, but even authentic nations, in asserting their identities, often rely on myths and downright lies. Up to a point such myths are harmless and exercise a positive influence. But nationalist myths are not always naive or innocent. Every nation has a record of high crimes and misdemeanors.

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